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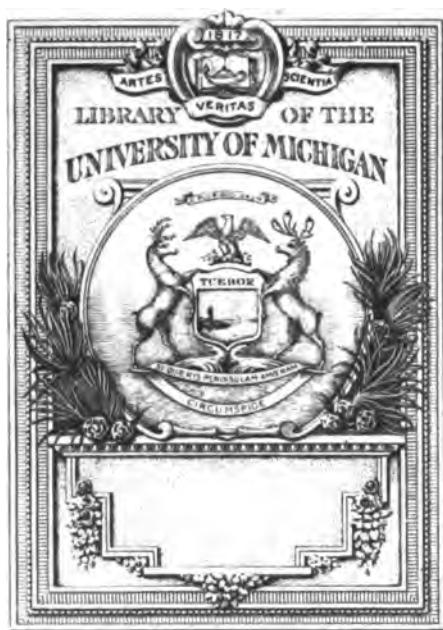
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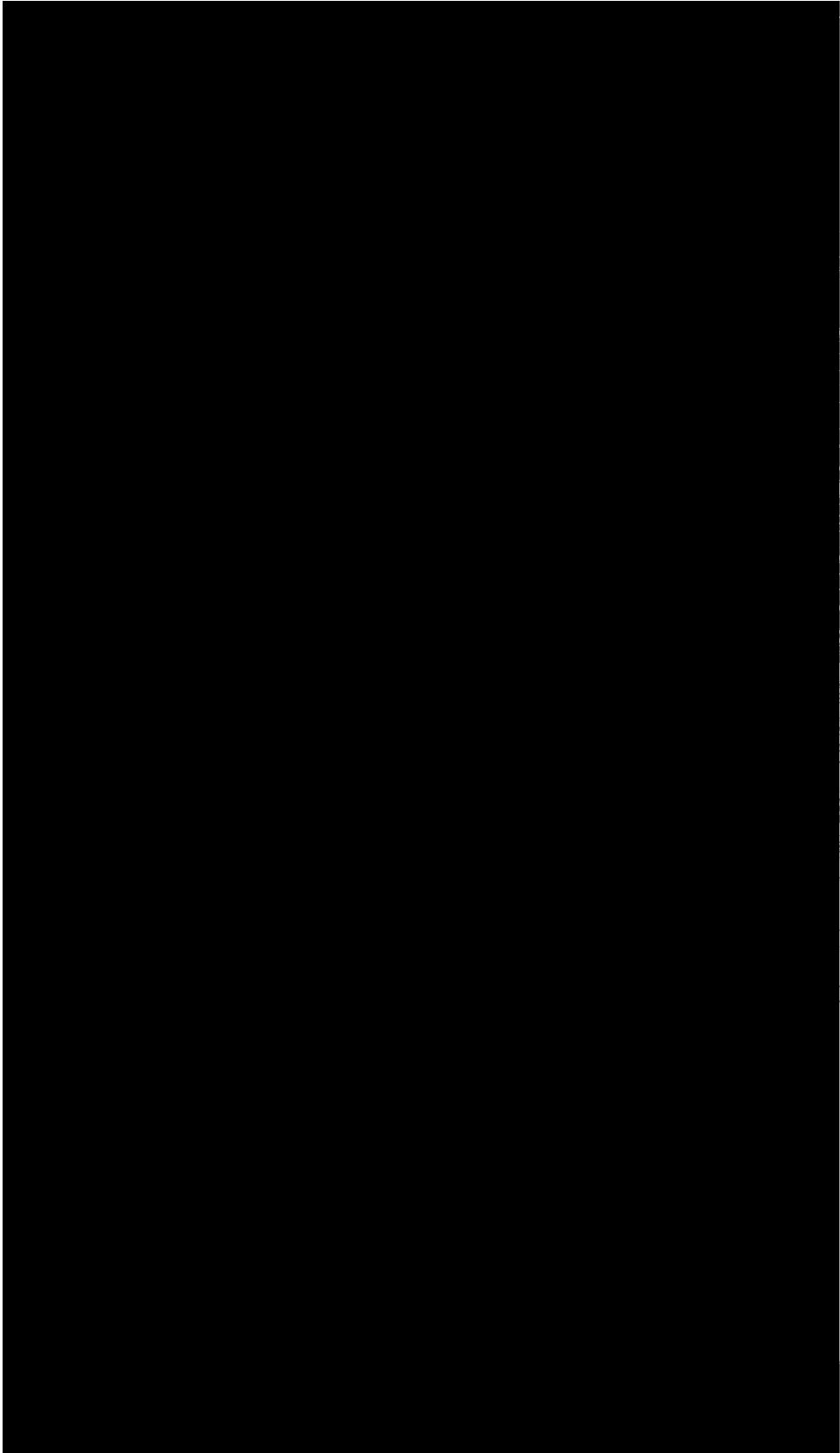
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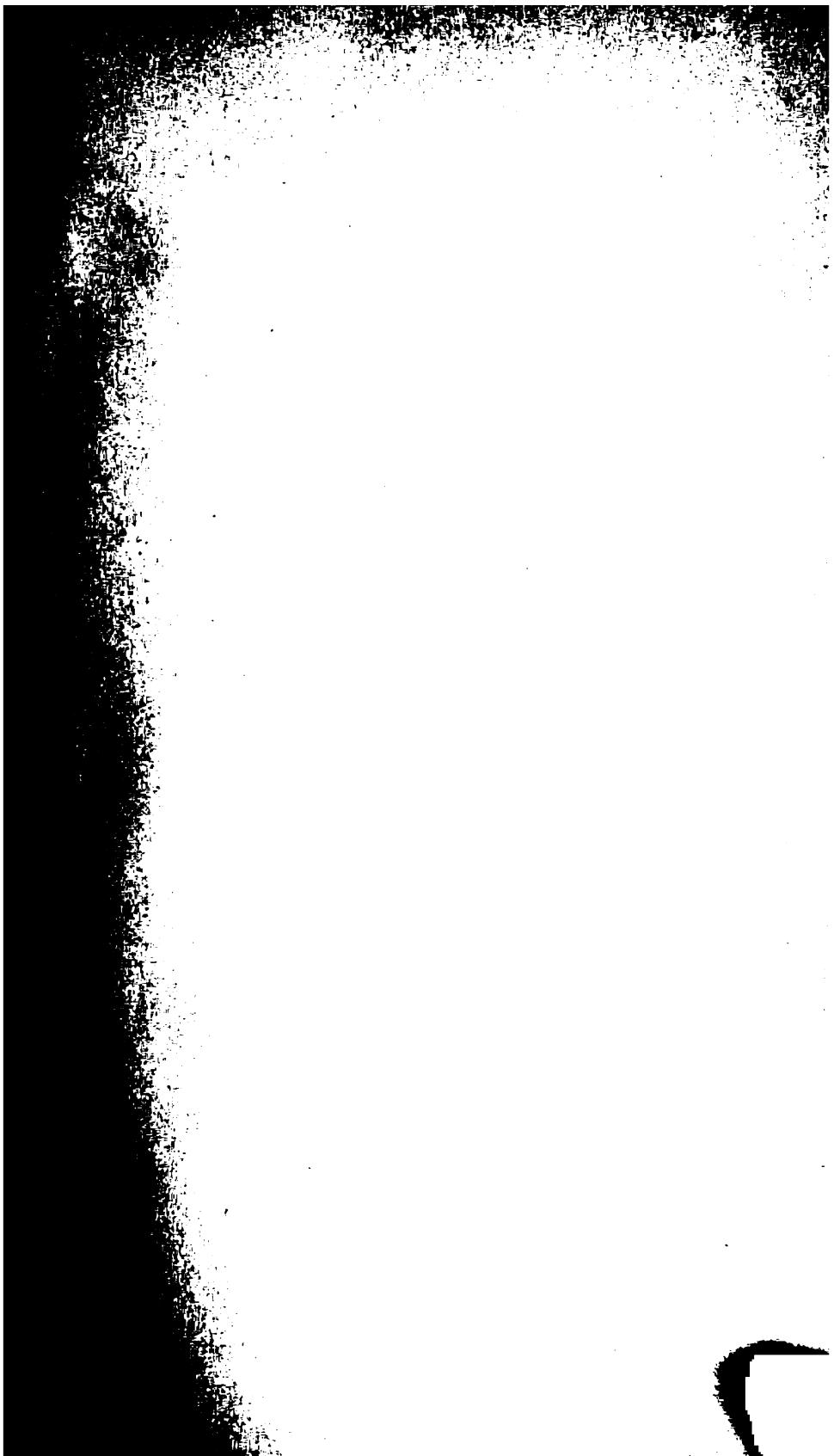
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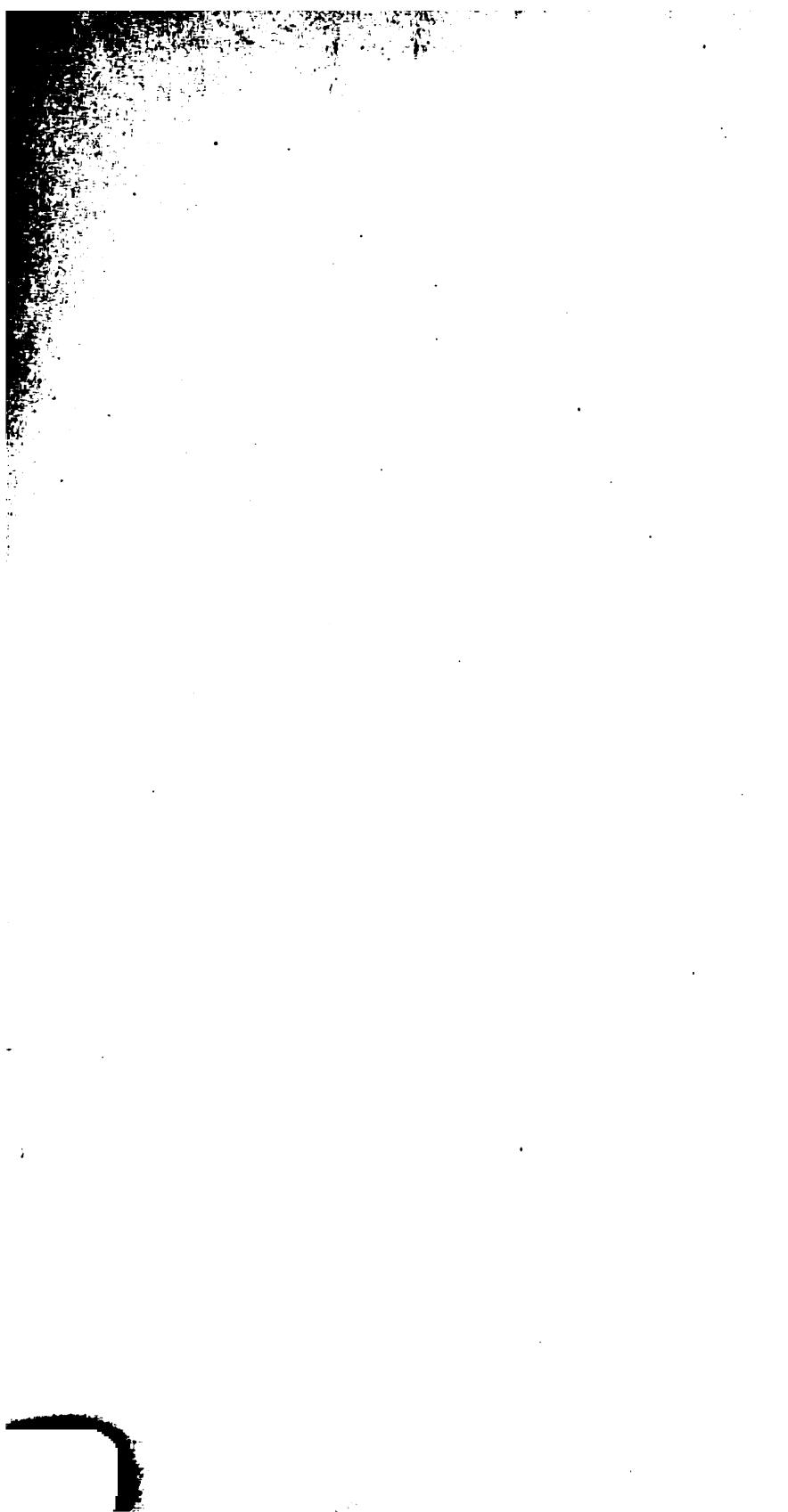
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THE ARTS IN ART



J.F.

7

DEALS IN ART.

ESSAYS THEORETICAL PRACTICAL CRITICAL
BY WALTER CRANE Author of *Line & Form*



BY GEORGE BELL & SONS 1905



CHISWICK PRESS: CHARLES WHITTINGHAM AND CO.
TOOKS COURT, CHANCERY LANE, LONDON.

you

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PREFACE

THE collected papers which form this book have been written at different times, and at intervals of other work. Most of them were specially addressed to, and read before the Art Workers' Guild, as contributions to the discussion of the various subjects they deal with, so that they may be described as the thoughts of a worker in design addressed mainly to workers. They are not, however, wholly narrowly technical, and the point of view continually bears upon the general relation of art to life.

Some of the papers were delivered as lectures to audiences, and others have appeared elsewhere, mostly in journals devoted to art.

The former, the one upon the Arts and Crafts movement was prepared for and read as a series of lectures given during a recent session of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, and is now for the first time printed entirely.

"Thoughts on House-Decoration" was read before the convention of the National Union of Master Painters and Decorators held at Leicester.

"The Influence of Modern Social and Economic Conditions on the Sense of Beauty" was the substance of an address at the opening of a debate on that question at a meeting of the Pioneer Club.

The paper on "The Progress of Taste in Dress" was written for "The Healthy and Artistic Dress Union," and appeared in their journal "Aglaia." The article on Mr. Chesterton's book appeared in "The Speaker"; that on "The Teaching of Art" in "The Art Journal."

The notes on "Gesso" work appeared in an early number of "The Studio," and I have to thank the editor, Mr. Charles Holme, for kindly allowing me to reprint it here, and also for the loan of the blocks used for the illustrations, both for this and others of the papers.

My best thanks are also due to Mr. Ernest Gimson for the loan of photographs of his cottage at Stoneywell; to the Earl of Pembroke for enabling me to obtain those of the double cube room at Wilton; to Mr. Charles Rowley, and Mr. Charles W. Gamble of the Municipal School of Technology, Manchester, for photographs of the Madox Brown frescoes; to Mr. Augustus Spenser and Mr. FitzRoy, the Principal and the Registrar of the Royal College of Art, for their help in obtaining for me the examples of the work of the students given; and to Mr. Arthur P. Monger for the care he took in photographing them; also to Mr. Kruger of the Royal College, for the use of his admirable drawing of the decorations of

Minister Bridge, which appeared in "The Progress of Art," and is now reproduced by arrangement of Mr. M. H. Spielmann and Son, Cassell.

I should like to add a note or two on some illustrations, on other points not commented upon in the papers.

This sketch plan and elevation of a collective dwelling (at page 116), for which I am indebted to my architect-son, is offered as a suggestion what could be done in this way on very simple lines. Each tenant in such a collective dwelling would have his private house or cottage with the advantage of the use of the common dining-hall, and the service of a collective kitchen; also a general reading-room, and to each room a vaulted way with an open arcade leading side next the quadrangle would enable the tenant to reach this part of the building either from his own dwelling, which commands a private garden, as well as the use of the common quadrangle.

On the architectural point of view grouped dwellings, based upon some such principle as here suggested, would undoubtedly lend themselves to a simple and pleasant treatment, and would remove the depressing effect of the monotonous squat dwellings intended for our workers' houses, and the mean sameness of the streets, which, spreading around our great towns in every direction, only, it is to be feared, to form the future.

As regards to Manchester, spoken of on page 116, no other practical step has been taken in

the much-needed direction of school-decoration. Through the public spirit of Mr. Grant, one of her citizens, who has found money enough to start the work, students of the Municipal School of Art are enabled to carry out on a large scale mural paintings upon the upper walls of the class-rooms in one of the principal primary schools. The subjects have been enlarged from some of my coloured book designs such as "Flora's Feast." Such work might not only be made to bear most helpfully on the general work of education, but in itself be an important side of school influence, since by means of large simple typical mural designs great historical events and personages, as well as natural form, might be made familiar to the eyes of children at the same time that their sense of beauty and imaginative faculties were appealed to.

Local history might in this way be preserved also. In this connection one was glad to see the other day at Hoxne (the ancient Eagles-dune) in Suffolk the school-house connected with the history of the place by having a figure of St. Edmund carved as a finial of the chief gable, with a relief in stone let into the wall beneath, illustrating the incident of the saintly king being taken by the Danes at the bridge, while an inscription mentions that the building marks the spot, and the date of his death in 870.

WALTER CRANE.

VIEW TREE FARM,
September, 1905.

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ARTS IN ART

THE ARTS AND CRAFTS MOVEMENT, ITS GENERAL TENDENCY AND POSSIBLE OUTCOME

It is a strange thing that the last quarter of the nineteenth—or what I was going to call the machine-made—century should be characterized by a revival of the handicrafts; yet of course, if there can be any revival of that revival there can now be no doubt, from whatever point we date it, to whomsoever we may trace it.

It seems to me that the more we consider the characteristics of different epochs in art, or of the world, the less we can isolate them, or to deal with them as things by themselves, so related they seem to have gone before them, and to what follows them, just as are the personalities with them; and I do not think this of ours will prove any exception to

what we do on the threshold of a new epoch so often means a new epoch in

Of the Arts
and Crafts
movement:
Its general
tendency and
possible out-
come

history, if not in art—it may, perhaps, be allowable to look back a bit, as well as forward, in attempting a general survey of the movement. Like a traveller who has reached a certain stage of his journey, we look back over the region traversed, losing sight, in such a wide prospect, and in the mists of such a far distance, of many turns in the road, and places by the way, which at one time seemed important, and only noting here and there certain significant landmarks which declare the way by which we have come.

To take a very rapid glance at the phases of decorative art of the past century, we see much of the old life and traditions in art carried on from the eighteenth century into the early years of the nineteenth, when the handicrafts were still the chief means in the production of things of use or beauty. The luxurious excess of the later renaissance forms in decoration, learned from France and Italy (though adopted in this country with a certain reserve), corrected by a mixture of Dutch homeliness, and later by French empire translations of Greek and Roman fashions in ornament, often attained a certain elegance and charm in the gilded stucco mirror frames and painted furniture of our Regency period; which replaced the more refined joinery, veneer, and inlaid work of Chippendale and his kinds.

Classical taste dominated our architecture, striving hard to become domesticated, but looking chilly and colourless in our English gray climate, as if conscious of inadequate clothing.

This Greco-Roman empire elegance gradually

had given way to rigid plainness in domestic furniture, and to corpulency in furniture, as the nineteenth century was approached. When the old traditional tradition in furniture, handed down from Hepplewhite, Chippendale, Sheraton, and Hepplewhite, was seen to be suddenly broken into by such mad and fantastic attempts at naturalism as were exhibited with a reckless curvature of legs supporting (or supported by) the sprawling. Drawing-rooms revelled in French clocks, vast looking-glasses, and heavy artillery of polished mahogany, while Berlin-wool-work and anti-
que lace and crochet took possession of any room occupied by artificial flowers, and lamps under glass shades.

The exhibition was the apotheosis of mid-nineteenth-century taste, or absence of taste, in the display of industrial art and furniture. To judge from illustrated catalogues and journals of the period, seemed to have got into a strange state. The new naturalism was beginning to assert itself, but generally in a haphazard, and in all sorts of unsuitable ways. Those were the days when people thought the skill of a sculptor who represented a veiled figure in marble so that you could see through the veil!—but that was not the case. Industrial art was in a very different state, yet it was influenced by fine art, which, greatly to its disadvantage. We had landscapes upon china and coal-scuttles, and Landseer pictures on

hearth-rugs—and our people loved to have it so.

These things were done, and more also, in the ordinary course of trade, which flourished exceedingly, and no one bothered about design. If furniture and fittings were wanted, the upholsterer and ironmonger did the rest.

Yet was it not in the "fifties" that Alfred Stevens made designs for iron grates? so that there must have been *one* artist, at any rate, not above giving thought to common things. Designers like Alfred Stevens, and his followers Godfrey Sykes and Moody, certainly represented in their day a movement inspired chiefly by a study of the earlier renaissance, and an honest desire to adapt its forms to modern decoration. Their work, though suffering—like all original work—deterioration at the hands of imitators, showed a search for style and boldness of contour and line, touched with a certain refined naturalism which gives the work of Alfred Stevens and his school a very distinct place. It was mainly a sculptor's and modeller's movement, and represented a renaissance revival in modern English decorative art; and through the work of Godfrey Sykes and Moody, in association with the government schools of art, it had a considerable effect upon the art of the country.

But I think many and mixed elements contributed to the change of feeling and fashion which came about rather later, in which perhaps may be traced the influence of modes of thought expressing themselves also in literature and

and in the study of different models of the Art
and Craft Exposition.

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Page from
Blake's
"Songs of
Experience".

The Little Girl Lost

In futurity prophetic see,
That the earth from sleep
(Gave the residence deep)

Shall arise and seek
For her maker a cold
And the desert wild,
Become a garden mild.

In the southern clime
Where the sunmers prime
Never fades away,
Lymph Lycia lay -
Seven summers old
Lymph Lycia told
She had wandered long
Bearing min birds along
Seven sleep come to me
Unto meath the tree
The feather mother weep -
Where can Lycia sleep?
Lost in desert wild
Is your little child
How can you sleep
If her mother weep
If her heart does aile
Then let Lycia make
My mother sleep
Lycia shall not weep
From my bairning in the
Over this desert bright
Let thy mother weep
While I clasp thy gress
Sleeping Lycia lay
While the hearts of pure
Come from eastern dim
Viewed the maid asleep
The hairy lion stand
And the virgin weard
There he gan cold round
Over the halidom ground



nor forget that the early years of the
century were illuminated by the

Of the Arts
and Crafts
movement

Page from
Blake's
"Songs of
Innocence"

name and work of William Blake, whose friend
inspiration and clearness of inner vision stand



expressed in so individual a form with such
fervour of poetic feeling and social aspiration,
both in verse and design, in the books engraved



The Return Home



Ideal Pa-
toral Life



The Cham-
ber Idyll

Wood Engravings by
Edward Colvert

The Flood



The Lady
and the
Rooks



The Brook



and which, though the remarks
of Mr. Ruskin and others
have obscured his original
genius, still remains one of the
most attractive associated with him,
such as Edward Calvert and Samuel Palmer.

Illustrations
to Tennyson



"The Ballad
of Oriana."
By Holman
Hunt

In English poetic illustration,
wood engraving and printing,
in character and beauty, the influence
may be seen at the present day
in the woodcuts of Mr. Sturge Moore:
the conscious classical designs of Flax-

Of the Art
and Crafts
movement

man and Stothard were colder, but graceful, and mark a period from which we seem more widely separated than from others more remote, yet seemingly nearer in sentiment.

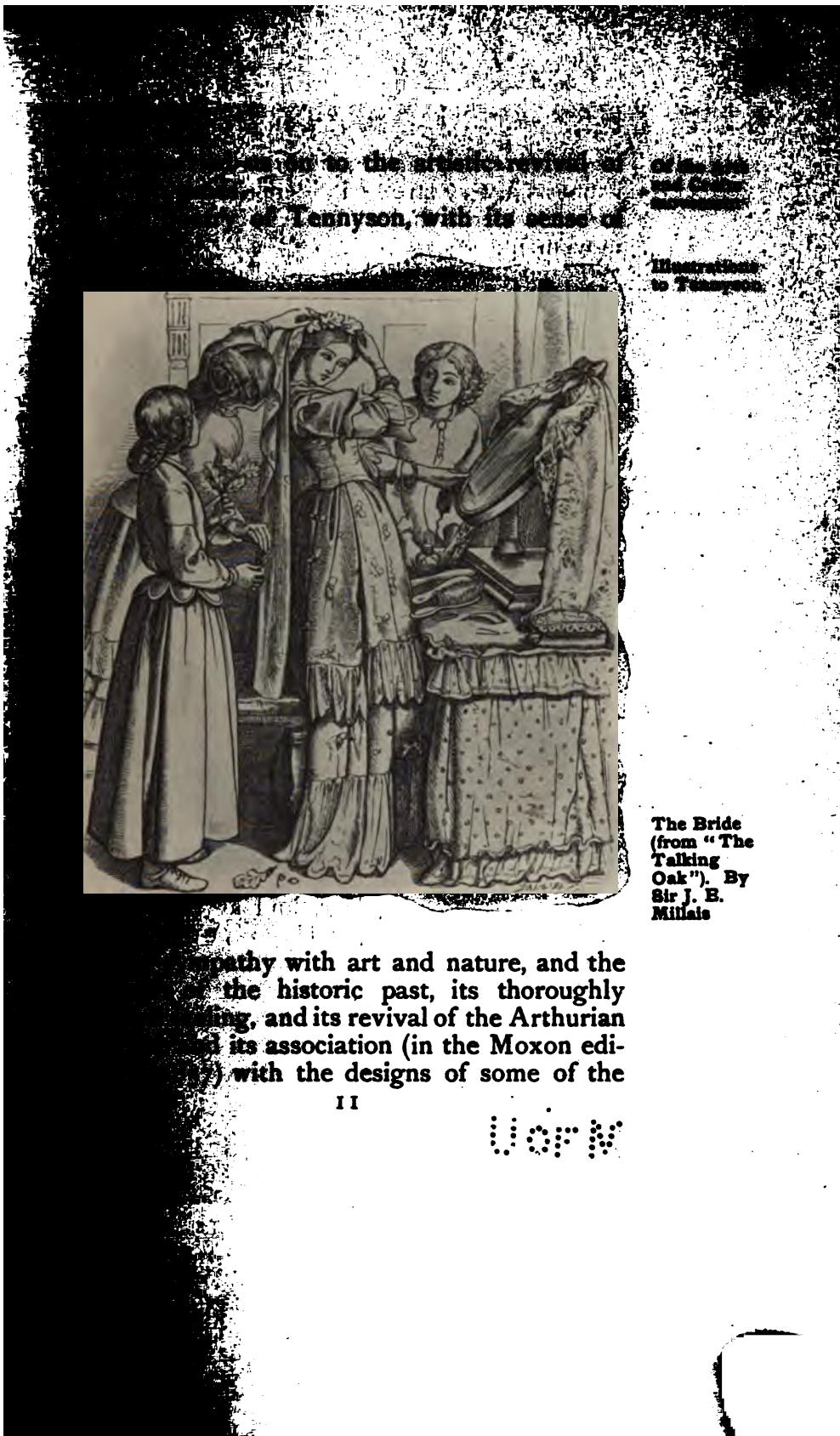
Quite a different kind of sentiment was fostered by the writings of Scott upon which so

Illustrations
to Tennyson

"The Palace
of Art." By
D. G. Ros-
setti



many generations have been fed, but they had their effect in keeping alive the sense of romance and interest in the life of past days, still further enlightened by the researches of antiquarians, and the increased study of the Middle Ages, and above all of Gothic architecture. All these must be considered as so many tributary streams to swell the main current of thought and feeling



The Bride
(from "The
Talking
Oak"). By
Sir J. E.
Millais

sympathetic with art and nature, and the
the historic past, its thoroughly
romantic, and its revival of the Arthurian
legend, and its association (in the Moxon edition)
with the designs of some of the

leading pre-Raphaelite painters must be seen, if not as a very strong influence upon, at least as an evidence and an accompaniment of the movement.

The names of Ford Madox Brown, of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, of William Holman Hunt, once suggest artists of extraordinary individuality, remarkable decorative instinct, and a fulness for, and scholarly knowledge of, beauty and significant accessories of life, of which they have not only given evidence in their own art of painting, but also as practical designers.

The name of another remarkable artist may be mentioned, that of Frederick Sandys, who was temporary with the pre-Raphaelites, imbued with their spirit, and following their methods of work. A wonderful draughtsman and powerfully gifted designer, who in all his work shows him fully alive to beauty of decorative design in completeness, care, and taste with which the accessories of his pictures and designs are rendered. His powers of design and draughtsmanship are perhaps best shown in the illustrations engraved on wood which appeared in "Once a Week," "The Cornhill Magazine," and elsewhere, which were shown with the collections of the artist's work at the International Society's last exhibition at the New Gallery, and at the Winter Exhibition at Burlington House in the present year (1905).

In some quarters it appears to be supposed that the pre-Raphaelite movement consisted entirely of Rossetti, and that to explain its development you have only to add water—or care.



From "The
Cornhill
Magazine."

cature. It is extraordinary to think in what uncritical positions professional critics occasionally land themselves.

I cannot understand how any candid and fairly well-informed person can fail to perceive that the pre-Raphaelite movement was really a very complex movement, containing many different elements and the germs of different kinds of development in art.

If it was primitive and archaic on one side, it was modern and realistic on another, and again, on another, romantic, poetic, and mystic; or again, wholly devoted to ideals of decorative beauty.

The very names of the original members of the brotherhood, to say nothing of later adherents, suggest very marked differences of temperament and character, and these differences were reflected in their art.

The stimulating writings of Ruskin must also be counted a factor in the movement, in his recognition of the fundamental importance of beautiful and sincere architecture and its relation to the sister arts: in his enthusiasm for truer ideals both in art and life: in the ardent love of and study of nature so constantly, so eloquently expressed throughout his works.

Despite all controversial points, despite all contradictions—mistakes even—I think that every one who has at any time of his life come under the influence of Ruskin's writings must acknowledge the nobility of purpose and sincerity of spirit which animates them throughout.

the influence now in some quarters to come into vogue. It was a wholesome, but at all events it was a powerful influence, and no man must be responsible for the mistakes or mischiefs of his followers—the inevitable result of genius.

The influence which certainly had practical results in many ways, and not least must be ascribed to its influence upon the life, opinions and character of the man to whose workshop is attributed the practical revival of sincere and honest handcraft in modern England—I may say I mean William Morris.

It is possible that at the outset the initiation of the practical revival was due to a group of men bearing the names already mentioned, but in later days the practical direction of the work fell into the hands of William Morris. The fact that the enterprise had the sympathetic support of the leading artists of the Pre-Raphaelite School must not be forgotten.

It is said that the initiative or first proposal in the matter came from Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and it must be remembered that the main object of the firm was to supply their own circle with furniture and household articles to suit their own tastes, though the range were afterwards extended to the extraordinary success. The work, however, the group was strengthened on the

architectural side by such excellent designers as Philip Webb, who, in addition to architectural constructive work of all kinds is

remarkable for the force and feeling of his designs of animals used in decorative schemes, both in the flat and in relief.

The hare and hound in the frieze of the dining-room at South Kensington Museum are early works of his, as well as the woodwork of the room.

The study of mediaeval art had, however, been going on for many years before, and books of the taste and completeness of those of Henry Shaw, for instance, had been published, dealing with many different provinces of decorative art, from alphabets to architecture. The well engraved and printed illustrations of these works afforded glimpses even to the uninitiated of the wonderful richness, invention and variety of the art of the Middle Ages—so long neglected and misunderstood—while the treasures of the British Museum in the priceless illuminated manuscripts of those ages were open to those who would really know what mediaeval book-craft was like.

Then, too, the formation of the unrivalled collections at South Kensington, and the opportunities there given for the study of very choice and beautiful examples of decorative art of all kinds, especially of mediaeval Italy and of the earlier renaissance, played a very important part both in the education of artists and the public, and helped with other causes to prepare the way for new or revived ideas in design and craftsmanship.

The movement went quietly on at first, confined almost exclusively to a limited circle of

amongst art artistically-minded people. It grew out of the shadow of the atrocious Franco-Prussian war and the fashion of the sixties, now (or recently) which we admired, crinolines and all, in some measure, because I suppose they are so old-fashioned.

Independent signs of dissatisfaction with current fashions, however, were discernible here and there. It was, I think, about this time that Mr. Charles L. Eastlake (late Keeper of the Queen's Gallery) who was trained as an architect, published a book called "Hints on Household Taste," in which he says somewhere: "In the contemplation of palaces we have no time to look about us for a chair." This was to indicate a reaction against the extravagance then given to what were called "the Fine Arts."

Societies were formed for the discussion of artistic questions of all kinds, and I mind particularly of certain society of art students which meet in the well-known room at No. 9, New Bond Street, the existence of which indicated that there were thought and movement in the minds of the younger generation and new ideas were in the wing, many of them carrying the promise of important future developments. Even in Queen Square there were certain dealers in furniture and surface decorations not swayed by trade ideals, who maintained the existence as decorative artists.

There were architects, too, of such distinction as Pugin, William Burges, and others who were fully alive to the value of

mediaeval art, and were bold experimenters as well as scholars and enthusiasts in their revival of the use of mural decoration in colour.

Mr. Norman Shaw's work, which has so much influenced the newer architectural aspects of London, comes later, and is more distinctly and intimately related to our movement, which it may here be said has owed much of its strength to its large architectural element.

There were, of course, builders and decorators in those days, but the genus "decorative artist" was a new species as distinct from the painter and paper-hanger.

While these, and the historic, the landscape, the animal, and *genre* painter had their exhibitions, were recognized, and some of them duly honoured at times, decorative artists and designers may be said to have had nowhere to lay their heads—in the artistic sense—so they laid their heads together!

The immediate outcome of this sympathetic counsel took the form of fireside discussions by members of a society of decorative artists founded by Mr. Lewis F. Day, strictly limited in number, called "the Fifteen." This small society was in course of time superseded, or rather absorbed, by a larger body known as the Art Workers' Guild, which contained architects, painters, designers, sculptors, and craftsmen of all kinds, and grew and increased mightily; it has since thrown out a younger branch in the Junior Art Workers' Guild.

Guilds, or groups of associated workers were also formed for the practice and supply of cer-

handicrafts, and societies like that of the <sup>of the Arts
and Crafts
movement</sup> Arts and Industries Association or the village classes in wood-carving, pottery, book-work, basket-making, turning, spinning, dyeing linen, embroidery, and other crafts. These efforts, mostly due to a band of enthusiastic amateurs, must all be counted, if not very satisfactory in their results, yet as educational in their effects, and as creating a wider interest in the handicraft movement, therefore as adding impetus to that movement which in 1888—the year of our own foundation—even rose to the height of extending to the length of—a “National Association for the Advancement of Art in Relation to Industry” (such was its title) which held congresses in successive years in London, Edinburgh, and Birmingham—as if we were scientists or sectarians. Members of this society were more or less connected with developments.

At this time we had, as we still have, a National Academy of Arts. But somewhere in the fifties arose certain bold, bad men who started with an annual picture-show of two thousand works or so, always fresh—to see a national exhibition of art which comprise not only paintings, sculpture, architectural water-colours, but some representation of the arts and handicrafts of design. The plank in this artistic platform was the election of a selection and hanging out of and by the whole body of the kingdom. This movement at-

tracted a considerable number of adherents, largely among the rising school of painting, until it was discovered that several of the leaders desired to belong to the garrison of the fortress they proposed to attack.

The Arts and Crafts section of this movement, mostly members of the Guild aforesaid, seeing their vision look hopeless in that direction, then withdrew, and formed themselves into the present Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, with power to add to their number. And I think they gathered to themselves all the artists and craftsmen of standing who were sympathetic and willing to subscribe to their aims.

We may note here that since the directors of the Grosvenor Gallery in its Winter Exhibition of 1881 arranged a collection of designs for decoration, including cartoons for mosaic, tapestry, and glass, no attempt to show contemporary work of the kind had been made.

We were, however, but few at first, and but few of us widely known, and with limited influence. William Morris and Burne-Jones did not join us until we had fairly organized ourselves and defined our programme, though their works from the first have enriched our exhibitions.

The initial steps were laborious and difficult and the process of organization slow, each step being carefully debated. Suitable premises seemed at one time impossible to procure, the demands of an ordinary picture-gallery being by no means suited to the mixed displays of an arts and crafts exhibition, so little so, indeed,

that it was proposed to hire a large old-fashioned London mansion in order to group our exhibits in better relation.

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Time, however, seemed to help us somewhat, as, during the period of our formation the New Gallery was opened—emerging in marble and gilding from its whilom dusty chrysalis as an abandoned meat market—and here, in the autumn of 1888, as may be remembered, supported by a courageous list of guarantors we opened our first exhibition.

I think we were fully conscious that an exhibition is at the best necessarily a very imperfect thing, and should probably even agree that it was a necessary evil. An exhibition of so many various elements as an arts and crafts show put together has its own particular diffi-

culties. We cannot place fragmentary pieces of decorative art in their proper relation, and relation is the essence of good decorative art.

We are driven to a sort of compromise, finding practical difficulties in the way of logical grouping—such as the grouping according to authorship—or resorting to a mixed method with a view to the best decorative ensemble with the objects at hand—with the result, I fear, of disappointing the feelings of nearly everybody concerned—but that is the common fate of exhibition committees.

I had the honour of being president of the society for the first three years of the society's existence. I had occasion to state its objects and

principles as far as I understood them, and as these are set forth in our Book of Essays it does not seem necessary to repeat what is there written, but a short re-statement of the chief points may not be out of place here.

We desired first of all to give opportunity to the designer and craftsman to exhibit their work to the public for its artistic interest and thus to assert the claims of decorative art and handicraft to attention equally with the painter of easel pictures, hitherto almost exclusively associated with the term art in the public mind.

Ignoring the artificial distinction between Fine and Decorative art, we felt that the real distinction was what we conceived to be between good and bad art, or false and true taste and methods in handicraft, considering it of little value to endeavour to classify art according to its commercial value or social importance, while everything depended upon the spirit as well as the skill and fidelity with which the conception was expressed, in whatever material, seeing that a worker earned the title of artist by the sympathy with and treatment of his material, by due recognition of its capacity, and its natural limitations, as well as of the relation of the work to use and life.

We sought to trace back ornament to its organic source in constructive necessity.

We asserted the principle that the Designer and Craftsman should be hand in hand, and work *head* with hand in both cases, so that mere redundancy of ingenious surface ornament on the one hand, or mechanical ingenuity in executive

either the other, should not be considered as ends in themselves, but only as means to ends; neither the one nor the other being tolerable without controlling taste.

But how assign artistic credit to nameless workers? One can hardly expect artistic judgment and distinction without artistic responsibility, and, according to the usual methods of commercial exhibitions, individual designers and workmen were concealed under the general designation of a firm.

We therefore asked for names of responsible workmen—those who had contributed in any way to the artistic character of the work.

This seemed a simple and obvious request, but there has probably been more difficulty over this point than over any other of our pro-

grams. Here we encounter the sharp corner of an important question, as is so often the case in pur-
suing a question of principle in art—a question
concerning the position and artistic freedom of the
workman. A workman, one perhaps of many
who contribute to the production of a piece of
craftsmanship, is in the hands of the
firm which exhibits the work. It is to the com-
mercial interest of the firm to be known as the
maker of the work, and it must be therefore
the good nature or sense of fairness, or desire
of the firm to our conditions, when the name
of the actual workman is given, who so long
as he is in the employ of a firm is supposed to
work exclusively in that firm's interest. Com-
plaints have been made that the workman whose

name is given on an exhibited work may be tempted away to work for a rival firm,—an interesting illustration of the working of our system of commercial competition.

Yet, if a workman is worthy of his hire, the good craftsman is surely worthy of due personal credit for his skill, and if superior skill has a tendency to increase in market value, we need not be surprised, either as employers or private artists, seeing that in either case *we* should consider it fair to avail *ourselves* of such increase.

I think the question must be honestly faced. As it is, owing to accidents, intentional omissions, or inadvertencies, our cataloguing in this respect has not been so complete as one could wish, and we are necessarily dependent in respect to these particulars upon our exhibitors.

Our exhibition for the first three years was *annual*. With the election of William Morris as President a change of policy came in, and it was considered advisable to limit ourselves to triennial exhibitions. This was partly because the organization of a yearly exhibition put a considerable strain and responsibility upon a voluntary executive, and consumed a considerable amount of the thought and time of working artists; partly also from the consideration that more interesting shows would result if held after a three years' interval, giving time for the production of important work. It must be said, however, that artistic production of constructive and decorative work was then in fewer hands, and it was impossible to foresee the increase of activity in the arts and crafts, or the steady

experience of an interested, if comparatively limited, public, which we have enjoyed.

Looking back at the general character of our exhibitions, it is interesting to note certain lines of evolution in the development of design and the persistence of certain types of design. Now even in the work of a single artist, the character of his design is seen to undergo many changes in the course of his career, as he comes under various different influences. Some are more, some are less variable, but a man's youth-work differs considerably from his mature work, and his later work will again differ from his earlier work. While there is life there must be movement, growth, and change, let us tie ourselves down as narrowly as we will. But to start from this, the process of evolution is seen and felt in the conception and construction of a design before it finally leaves our hands. We get the germ of an idea, and in adapting it to its material and purpose it is necessarily modified. Even in the character and quality of its line and mass it is added to and taken away from in obedience to our sense of what is fit and harmonious.

So, this process takes place with the individual, how much more with many individuals developing either on one line or many? How much more shall we discern this trend of development in the sum and mass of work after the next few years?

To a superficial observer the work of a number of men more or less in sympathy in style and colour is apt to be labelled all alike,

whereas among that very group we may discern tendencies and sympathies in reality most diverse.

Now it seems as regards general tendencies in design in our movement that, after a period of a rich and luxuriant development of ornament, a certain reaction has taken place in favour of simplicity and reserve. It is probably a perfectly natural desire for repose after a period of excitement. And even where pattern is used the character of the form is much more restricted and formal as a rule. There is a tendency to build upon rectangular or vertical lines and to allow larger intermediary spaces.

The same desire for severity and simplicity in a more marked degree is to be observed in furniture design and construction. In fact, throughout all the recent work in the larger kinds of decoration and craftsmanship, this aim at simplicity and severity of line and general treatment is pronounced. This probably reflects the same feeling observable in recent domestic architecture, wherein a search for proportion and style, with simplicity of line and mass seem to influence the designer, and an appropriate use of materials rather than ornamental detail. But in one direction richness and artistic fancy seems to have found a new field, and it is a province which in our earlier exhibitions had hardly any representation at all, I mean jewellery and gold and silversmith's work and the art of enamelling, which show an extraordinary development, and may be claimed as a distinct and direct result of the new artistic

in the handicrafts. In these arts there is naturally very great scope for individuality and originality, for invention, for fancy, and taste. It was in the year 1887 that, at the invitation of Mr. Armstrong (the then Director for Art in the Science and Art Department) a French craftsman (the late M. Louis Dalpeyrat of Paris) gave a series of demonstrations in enamelling at the South Kensington schools. From the band of interested students was born Alexander Fisher, who took up the work seriously; his accomplishment is so well known that many workers in enamelling owe their instruction to him that he has been called the father of the recent English revival in this craft.

I ventured to say on some occasion in the early days of our movement that "We must turn our artists into craftsmen, and our craftsmen into artists."

It is certainly the first part of the sentence which has been fulfilled in a remarkable way, since the movement is chiefly notable for the number

indebted to Mr. Armstrong for some interesting information as to this. It appears that M. Louis Dalpeyrat had agreed to make copies of some of the pieces of enamel in the South Kensington Museum, which he did willingly, and these copies were used for circulation in provincial museums and schools of art. Mr. Armstrong gave his sanction for M. Dalpeyrat to give a series of demonstrations in enamelling to a class of twelve students of the National Art Training School (now the Royal College of Art), and these were given in the metallurgical department of the College of Science, where the plaques were made by Robert Austen having given permission. There was at that time for technical instruction.

of artists who have become craftsmen in a variety of different materials.

In the second, transformation has not taken place to the same extent, which may, perhaps, be more or less accounted for by the consideration of those economic questions before spoken of, in so far as they apply to the workman.

As a rule the workman has been specialized for a particular branch of work, or a particular subdivision of a branch of workmanship; he seldom can acquire an all-round knowledge of a craft, and is seldom able to take a complete or artistic view of his work, as a whole, as he never produces a complete whole under the conditions of the modern workshop or factory.

Then, too, English workmen have been trained to look upon mechanical perfection and mechanical finish as the ideal, and it is impossible to set up a different ideal in a short time.

It must be remembered, also, that, as a class, the modern workman is engaged in a great economic struggle—an industrial war, quite as real, and often as terrible in its results as a military one—to raise his standard of life, or even to maintain it amid the fluctuations of trade, and, as a rule, he is not in a position to cultivate his taste in art.

Let us hope that the new schools of design under the Technical Education Board will have their effect, as they undoubtedly offer new and better practical opportunities to young craftsmen than have been available before.

Such schools as the Central School of Arts and

Crafts under the London County Council, may be regarded as a direct outcome of the movement, and it is a remarkable fact that its teachers are composed principally of members of our society and committee, to whom the organization of the classes was due.

Besides, if the artist has learned of the craftsman, there must be a good deal of education going on quietly in the studios and workshops of those aforesaid artist-craftsmen, wherein the craftsman learns in his turn of the artist, and here again must spring good results.

Sound traditions of design and workmanship should be of enormous help in starting students on safe paths, and preventing that painful process of unlearning from which so many earnest students and artists have suffered in our days. These traditions, however, should never be allowed to crystallize or hinder new thought and freedom of invention within the limits of the world in which the designer works, for living art exhibits a constant growth and evolution; though in some cases the process of evolution in an artistic life may appear to take rather the form of degeneration, the important thing is to preserve life with its principle of growth, without losing balance, and above all, sense of beauty.

Beauty and utility are our guides in all art and handicraft, we can hardly go wrong. Design is organic both in itself and in its relation with constructive necessity—if it, springing out of that necessity, expresses the spirit of the artist, and is truly the crown of the

work, making the dumb material vocal with expressive line and form, or colour, it must at least be a thing having life, character, sincerity, and these are important elements in the expression of new beauty.

Along with the formation of discussion clubs and societies of designers and craftsmen, the tendency to form Guilds of Handicraft, whether they are a new form of commercial enterprise, or consist, as they frequently do, in the first place, of a group of artists and craftsmen in genuine sympathy working together with assistants, must be noted as another sign of the influence of the movement; as also the influence of certain types of design upon ordinary trade production.

It is even asserted that—I quote from a trade journal on a recent Arts and Crafts exhibition—“the arts and crafts movement has been the best influence upon machine industry during the past ten years”—that “while we have sought to develop handicrafts beside it on sound and independent lines, we have succeeded in imparting something of the spirit of craftsmanship to the best kind of machine-work bridging over the former gulf between machinery and tools, and quickening machine-industry with a new sense of the artistic possibilities that lie within its own proper sphere.”

Let us hope so, indeed.

Certainly we cannot hope that the world, just yet, will beat its swords into ploughshares, or its spears into pruning-hooks, still less that it will return to local industry and handicraft for

the times of life; or look solely to the independent artist and craftsman to make its house beautiful. The organized factory and the great commercial industries will continue to work for the middle class, as well as for the millionaire, under the present system of production; but, at any rate, they will be influenced by ideas of design, and it may be said that some manufacturers have already made themselves fully alive to the value of the co-operation of artists in this direction.

There are no desire and can command the permanent work of artists in design and handicraft who are able to enlist it, and this demand is likely to increase, and therefore industrial guilds of this kind may increase.

Small groups of workers, or workers in the various branches of handicrafts could by combination in some way still further counteract or control commercial production, by raising certain standards of workmanship and taste, and in the various branches of handicraft look after the artistic interests of their members generally, their power and influence might be much extended, especially if such guilds could be in some sort in friendly relation, so that they could on occasions meet together, combining their forces and resources, for instance, for special exhibitions, representations, such as masques and pageants of the kind recently presented by the Art Guild at the Guildhall of the City of

London, uniting as they do all kinds of skill and craftsmanship in the embodiment of a single idea, are a form of artistic expression

which may be regarded as the latest outcome of the movement, and may have a future before it.

I think that by such means, at all events, artistic life would be greatly stimulated, and artistic aims and ideals better understood—especially in their relation to social life.

And, surely, art has a great social function, even though it may have no conscious aim but its own perfecting.

Even in its most individual form it is a product of the community—of its age, and it is always impossible to say how many remote and mixed elements are combined to form that complex organism—an artistic temperament.

Every age looks eagerly in the glass which art and craftsmanship hold up, even if it is only to find itself reflected there. But it not only seeks reflection, it seeks expression—the expression of its thought and fancy, as well as its sense of beauty, and the successful artist is he who satisfies this search.

It seems, too, that every age, probably even each generation, has a different ideal of beauty, or that, perceiving a different side of beauty, each successively ever seeks some new form for its expression. This is the movement of growth and life, the sap of the new idea rising in the spring-time of youth through the parent stem, bursting into new branches and putting forth leaves; the green herb springing from the dead leaves—the new ever striving with the old.

It is always possible for a society to narrow down, or to widen. It may consider its true

and would be perfectly justified in doing so long as that school maintains its quality and power of growth.

On the other hand, it might determine to let no prejudices on the subject of school or exhibition exclude all good work after its kind. These points are largely controlled by conditions of available space and determination and are usually settled by the effective force of the view which has the majority. There might even be something to be said, however, for limited space, and security against damage, for placing every work sent in to the exhibitions, but keeping the *selected* work in the section.

"we might say, "is the material we have to deal with, and here is our selection, and here the exhibition an open court of appeal. It is a question for the future. We have, surely, even in our comparatively short history, been long enough to see great gaps in the English design. Great names, great names have passed from the roll of our members, not their memory, or the effect and influence of their work.

We are left to carry on the twin-lamp of Art and Handicraft as best we may. If we do it with steady hands, fully alive to the sense of continual life and freedom of expression in art, while conscious of the value of certain historic traditions, founded on aesthetic experiences, and the necessities of material and use, we may yet, I hope,

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be of service in our exhibition and other work, if we succeed in comprehending within our membership the best elements of both new and old, in maintaining the highest standard of taste and workmanship, and in placing, so far as we are able, the best after its kind, in our honest opinion, before the public.

THE TEACHING OF ART

the teaching of Art! Well, to begin with, you cannot teach it. You can teach certain methods of drawing and painting, carving, construction, what not—you can teach them. You can teach the logic and principles, but you cannot give the power of original thought and vision in them.

It is a man's ideas on the subject of art which necessarily depend upon his general knowledge of the purport and scope of art.

Is art (1) a mere imitative impulse—a record of material facts and phases of nature in some medium? or, is it (2) the most subtle expression of language, taking all manner of varied forms in all sorts of materials, and the paramount impulse of the selective sense of beauty?

Clearly, our answer to the question what art is, taught, and how to teach it depends upon our answer to these questions. But the first includes the less, and, though one may be led by the second definition given above, it does not follow that the first may not have its place in a course of study.

The question, then, really is, what is the helpful course of study towards the attainment of that desirable facility of workmanship, cultivation of the natural perception, feeling and judgement in the use of those elements of materials in their ultimate expression and realization of beauty?

And here we have to stop again on our way and ask what is this quality of beauty? whence does it come?

Without exactly attempting a final or philosophical account of it, we may call it the coming and efflorescence of the delight of man under happy conditions. The history of man's nature shows its evolution in ever varying shape and form, constantly affected by external conditions, and modified by place and circumstances, following, in the development of the sensibility to ideas and impressions of beauty, through the refinement of the senses and the intellect, in the same course as the development of man himself as a social and reflective animal.

As we cannot see colour without light, neither can we expect sensibility to beauty to grow naturally amid sordid and depressing surroundings.

To begin with, then, before we can have beauty we must have sensibility to beauty, and before we can have either we must have conditions which favour their existence and growth. We must have an atmosphere. A condition of life where they come naturally, with the colours of the dawn and the sunset; where the common occupations are not too burdensome, and the



Sketch for
Figure Com-
position.
"Frederigo
Barber-
rossa."
By Lancelot
Crane,
A.R.C.A.

U.S.A.

Of the
Teaching of
Art

anxiety for a living not too great to leave surplus energy or leisure for thought and creative impulse; where the cares of an empty life.

Royal Col-
lege of Art:
Painting and
Life School
under Prof.
Moira

Time Study.
By H. Parr



the deceitfulness of riches do not choke them; where art has not to struggle, as for very life, for every breath it draws, and ask itself the why and wherefore of its existence.

For art is not an independent accidental un-



Time
Studies of
Figures in
Action. By
H. Parr

related phenomenon, but is the result, and we find it in its various manifestations, of the ages of growth, and co-operative tradition and sympathy.

Seeking beautiful art, organic and related to all its parts, we turn naturally to places and periods of history which are the culminating points in such a growth. To Athens in the Fifth century, for instance; to almost any European town in the Middle Ages; to one of our own villages or churches, even, where the nineteenth-century restorer has not been; to Venice or Florence in the early renascence, rather than to modern London or Paris. But even limiting ourselves to our own day we have got to expect far more from the man who has worked from his youth up under what we call "an atmosphere of art," even if this is only that of the modern painter's studio, than from a mill hand, say, trained to some special function, perhaps, in some process of the machine industry, whose life is spent in monotonous toil and whose daily vision is bounded by chimney-pots and back-yards.

A pinch of the salt of art and culture at measured intervals, will never counteract the adverse and more prominent influence of the daily, hourly surroundings on the eye and mind. It is hopeless if one hour of life's day says "yes" if all the other twenty-three say "no" continually.

Our fundamental requirements then, are a sympathetic atmosphere, a favourable soil and climate for the raising of the seed of art in its fullest sense; which means, practically, a reason-



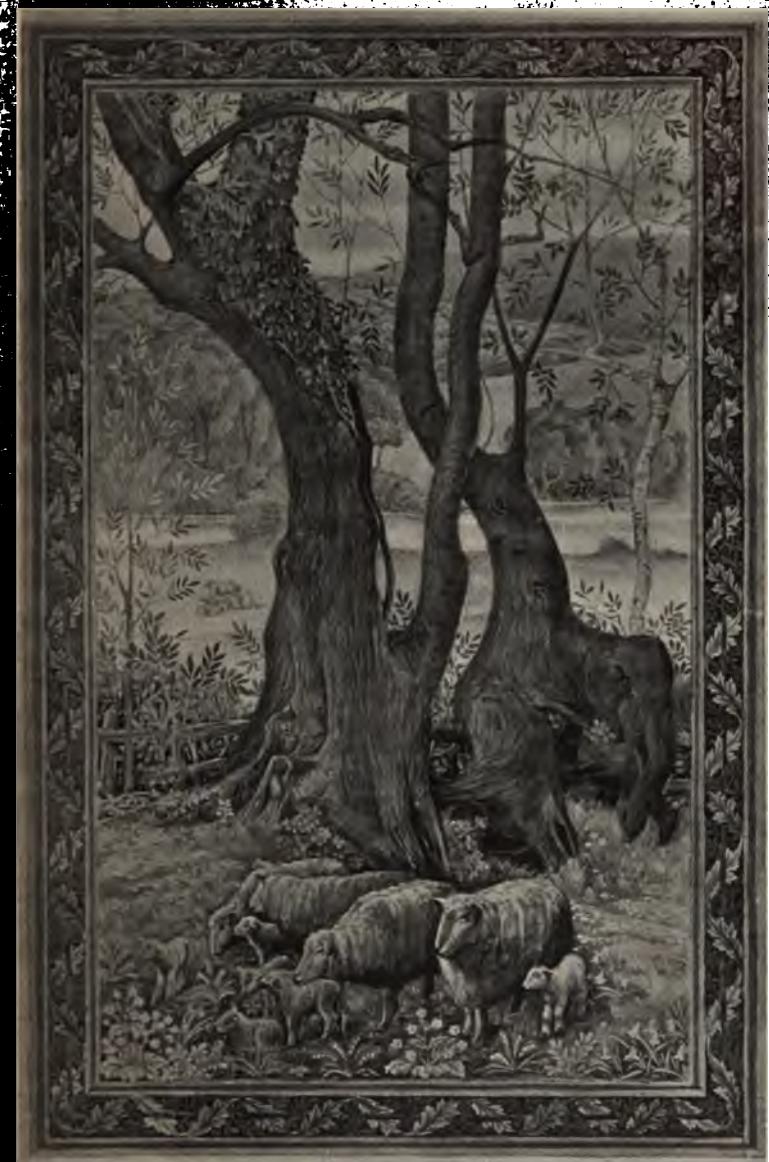
Time
Studies of
Figures in
Action

Royal Col-
lege of Art:
Architec-
tural School
under Prof.
Beresford
Pitt



Design and
Plan of a
Domed
Church. By
A. E. Martin





Design for
Tapestry.
By E. W.
Tristram

able human life, with fair play for the senses, and good for the drama of the soul; how many is this now possible?

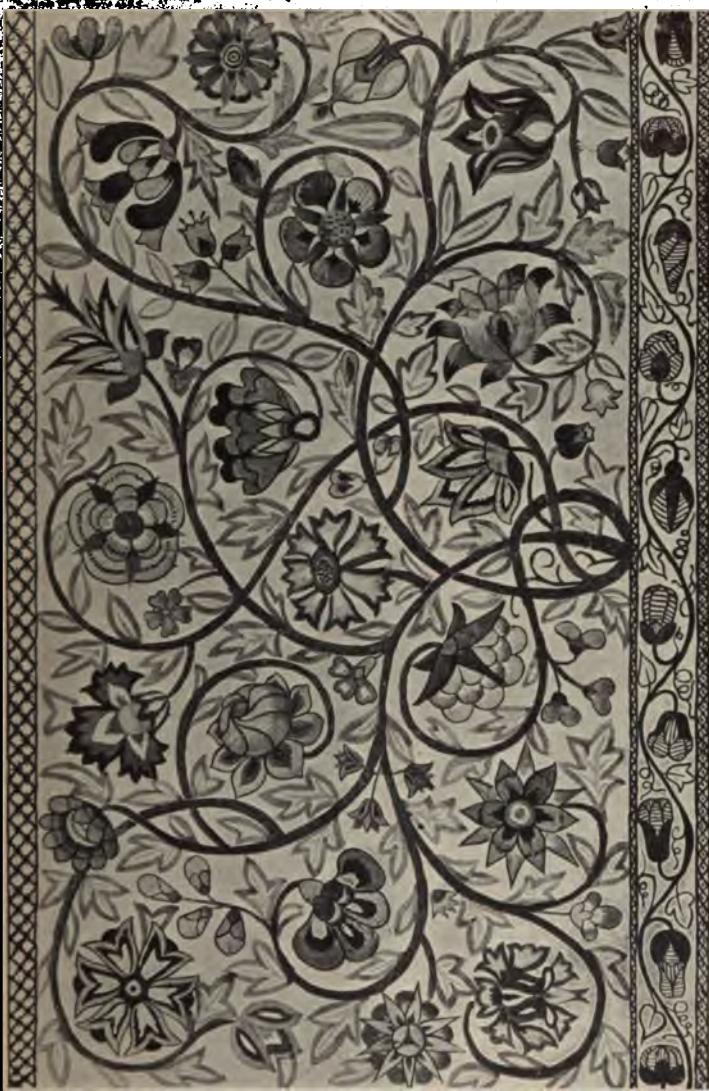
Granting this, however, would go a long way towards solving the next problem—what to teach? for we should then find that art is inseparable from life.

Children are never at a loss what to do or what to teach themselves, when they see some manner of interesting work going on about them, or access to tools and materials. They go into the door of the village blacksmith, or stand by the easel of the wayside painter. Demonstration is the one thing needed—demonstration, always demonstration, always demonstration. This is perhaps, at the bottom of the present strong admiration to French modes on the part of the younger painters. You can learn this in the painting business because you can't do anything else. You could learn any craft if you had done, and had ordinary aptitude. But it is not follow that there is no art but painting, and that impressionism is its prophet.

It might be said almost that the modern cabinet or competitive gallery picture, unrelaxed to anything but itself, and not always that well done, destroyed painting as *an art of design*.

I would, therefore, rather begin with the constructive, and adaptive, side of art. Let a student begin by some knowledge of architectural construction and form. Let him thoroughly understand the connection, both historic and artistic, between art and architecture. Let him become thoroughly imbued with a sense of the essential.

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Imperial
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School
under Prof.
Lethaby



Design for
Embroidery.
By Miss
L. M.
Dunkley

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lege of Art:
Design
School
under Prof.
Lethaby



Museum
Studies in
Embroidery.
By Miss
L. M.
Dunkley

Domestic
Dwelling
Habitation
Residence
Habitation
Habitation

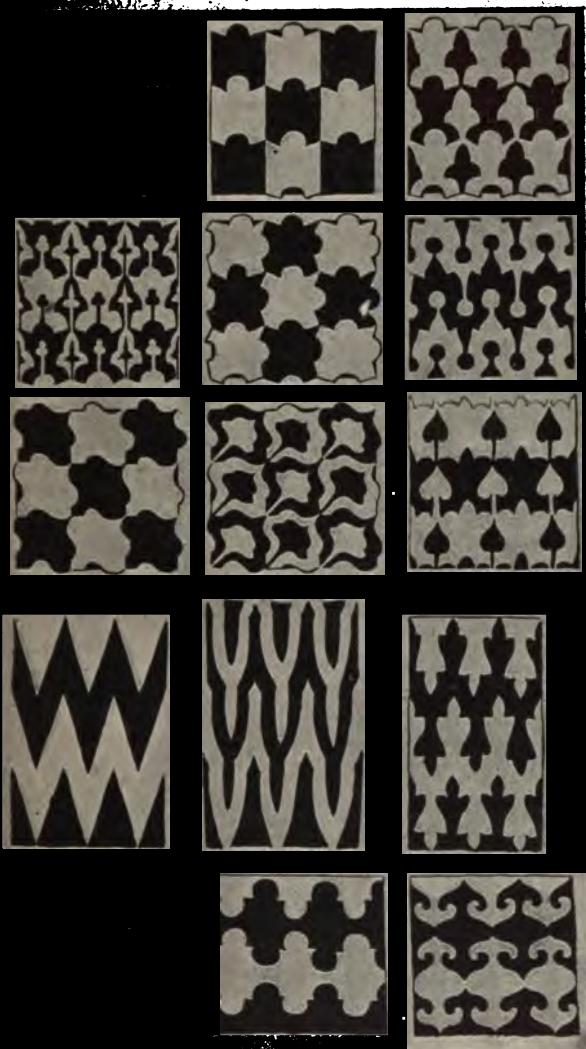
Sheet of
Heraldic
Studies.
By Miss
C. M. Lacey

unity of art, and not, as is now so often done, to be taught to practise some particular trick, or meaningless elaboration; or let us suppose that the whole object of his studies is to draw or paint any or every object from a pictorial point of view exclusively. Let the two sides of art be clearly and emphatically before him, which may be distinguished thus:—(1) Aspect, or the imitative; (2) Expression, or the imaginative. Let the student understand that it is one thing to be able to make an exact presentment of a figure, or any object, in proper light and shade and relief in relation to its background and surroundings; and quite another to express them in outline, or to turn them into organic pieces of decoration in the given space.

Then, again, he should perceive how the various media and materials of workmanship naturally determine the character and treatment of his design, while leaving ample range for individual choice and treatment.

The constructive and creative capacity may exist in a high degree without any corresponding power of drawing in the pictorial sense. Considerable proficiency in some of the minor forms of various handicrafts, such as ornamentation, modelling in relief, wood-carving, and repoussé work, is quite possible of attainment by other young people; whereas the perception of certain subtleties in pictorial methods of representation, such as perspective, planes, and values, and the highly selective sense which deals with them are matters of matured mental perception, as well

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Studies in
Counter-
change. By
W. G.
Spooner

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as technical experience and practical skill. The same is true as to power of design. There is no question of growth.

So that there are natural reasons for a course of training in some forms of handicraft, which while affording the same scope for artistic expression, present simpler problems in design, better workmanship, and give a tangible and substantial foundation to start with.

In thus giving the first places in a course of study in art to architecture, decorative design, and handicraft we are only following the historical order of their progress and development. While the arts of the Middle Ages culminated in the work of the great painters of the earlier Renaissance, their work showed how much more than makers of easel-pictures they were, so that a picture, apart from its central interest and pose was often a richly illustrated history or a contemporary design in such things.

Now, my contention is, that whereas a purely pictorial training, or such a training as is usually given with that view, while it often fails to be of much service in enabling a student to paint a picture, unfits him for other fields of art quite as important, and leaves him before the simplest problem of design helpless and ignorant; while a training in applied design, with all the force of thought, sense of beauty and fitness, ingenuity, and invention it would tend to call forth, would not only be a good practical education in itself, but would enormously strengthen the student for pictorial work, especially as regards design and the value of line, while he would get a clear

Studies of
Scroll
Forms. By
W. G.
Spooner

Studies of
Scroll
Forms. By
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Spooner

apprehension of the limitations of different kinds of art, and their analogies.

In studying form, if we model as well as draw we enormously increase our grasp and understanding of it, and so it is as regards art generally that studies in every direction will be found to bear upon and strengthen us in our main direction.

I should, therefore, endeavour to teach relatively—to teach everything in relation not only to itself, but to its surroundings and conditions; design in relation to its materials and purpose; the drawing of form in relation to other forms; the logic of line; pictorial colour and values in relation to nature but controlled by pictorial fitness.

The ordinary practice of drawing and study from the human figure—the Alpha and Omega of all study in art—does not seem sufficiently alive to the help that may be gained by comparative anatomy. We should study the figure not only in itself and for itself, but in relation to the forms of other animals, and draw the analogous parts and structures, side by side, not from the anatomist's point of view but the artist's. We should study them in life and action no less.

Now a word as regards action. We have been recently told that artists have been fools since the world began in their manner of depicting the action of animals, or rather animals in action, but it was by a gentleman who (though I fully acknowledge the value and interest of Mr. Muybridge's studies and discoveries) did

Royal Col-
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Design
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Lethaby



Studies of
Plant Form.
By W. G.
Spooner

not appear to have distinguished between moments of arrested action, and the action presented, which is the sum of those moments. Instantaneous photographs of animals in motion will tell you whereabouts their legs are at a given moment, but it is only when these are put in a consecutive series, and turned round inside of a horizontal wheel before the eye, that they represent action, and then it is illusionary art. Now the artist has to represent or to suggest action without actual movement of any kind, and he has generally succeeded not by arranging the literal action of the moment, but by grouping the sum of consecutive moments, much as the wheel does, but without the illusory trick. The business is to represent, not to imitate. Art after all is not science or analysis, or we might expect fidelity to the microscope on the part of our painters and draughtsmen. Until we all go about with photographic lenses in our heads instead of eyes, with dry plates or films instead of retinas, we shall, I fancy, still be interested in what artists have to say to us about nature and their own minds, whether instantaneous impressions, or the long result of years.

This is only one of the many questions which rise up at every step in the study of art, and I know of no system of teaching which adequately deals with them. No doubt our systems of teaching or attempting to teach art want constant overhauling, like most other systems. When we are overhauling the system of life itself, it is not wonderful.

I do not, of course, believe in any cast-iron

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Pen Draw-
ing. By
H. A. Rigby

system of education from any point of view must be varied according to individual tastes and capacities. It must be made personally interesting or it is of little good; and no system, however efficient, will manufacture men who can do anything: any more than the most brilliant talents will do away with the necessity of a passionate devotion to work, careful thought, observation and constant practice which produce that rapid and intimate sympathy between hand, and make them the responsive and delicate interpreters of that selective and native impulse which results in Art.

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Pen Draw-
ing. By
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OF METHODS OF ART TEACHING

Of Methods
of Art
Teaching

METHODS of teaching in art are, it, like most other human methods, strictly relative value, depending almost largely upon the current conception of the purpose, and province of art.

As this conception necessarily alters from time to time, influenced by all sorts of changes in the social organism (manifesting themselves in what we call Taste), as well as by fundamental economic conditions, ideas of what are the true methods of teaching change also.

Naturally in a time when scepticism is so profound as to reach the temerity of asking such a question as "What is art?" there can be no perceptible shock when inquiries are instituted as to the best methods of art teaching. As important witnesses in the great case—the position of art in general education, or *cultural interests v. the expansion of the human mind and the pleasure of life*—methods of art teaching have to be put in the box. What do they say?

Well, have we not the good old (so-called) Academic methods always with us?



Cabinet de-
signed and
decorated in
Gesso. By
J. R. Shea

Of Methods
of Art
Teaching

The study of the antique by means of shaded drawings, stumped or stippled "up to the nines" (if not further), leading on to equally elaborate life-studies, which somehow are expected to roll the impressions of eight, ten, or more sittings into one entirety—and wonderfully it is done, too, sometimes.

Are we not led to these triumphs through the winsome defiles of freehand and shaded

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lege of Art:
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Classes,
Pottery
under
Mr. Lunn

Group of
Pottery de-
signed and
executed by
the Students



drawing from the cast, perhaps accompanied by cheerful model drawing, perspective puzzles, and anatomical dissections, and drawings of the human skeleton seen through antique figures, which seem to anticipate the Röntgen rays?

"The proper study of mankind is man," but according to the Academic system it is practically the *only* study—study of the human frame and form isolated from everything else.

No doubt such isolation, theoretically at least, concentrates the attention upon the most diffi-

and importance of all
these movements; but
the real question
is, can we elaborate
any of them less arti-
ficially, so as really give
them a true grasp
of their real construc-
tion? Are they not too
easily taken
up in studies, and
lost rather in
the spirit?

Again, such
studies and pur-
suits go with the
idea of improving the
work, and the neces-
sity of the knowledge of a
certain number. They
are not to prepare
anyone for doing any-
thing, but for doing everything
skillfully, now,
as something
that can be
produced or clas-
sified. An easel pic-
ture, for instance, is to say,
is not necessarily
adapted to any-
thing else. It is some-
times exhibited
in the

Royal Col-
lege of Art:
Design
School Craft
Classes,
Wood-Carv-
ing, under
Mr. G. Jack



Wood-Carv-
ing by
J. R. Shea

Royal Col-
lege of Art:
Design
School Craft
Classes,
Stained
Glass, under
Mr. C. W.
Whall



Panel de-
signed and
executed by
A. Kidd

Royal Col-
lege of Art:
Modelling
School,
under Prof.
J. S. S.

250



Friese by
J. A. Steven-
son

open market with others of a like (or dis-like) nature, and, if possible, to be purchased and hung in a gallery, or in the more or less darkness of the private dwelling—"to give light unto them that are in the house."

Works of sculpture (or *modelling* as she is generally practised) may not fare any better (privately) in the end, when one remembers the busts placed back to the windows, or the marble statue forced to an unnatural whiteness by purple velvet hangings—but, certainly, the methods of teaching seem more in relation to the results.

To begin with, a sculptor's or modeller's figure (unless a decorative group or an architectural ornament) is isolated and has no background; and it is undoubtedly a severe test of skill and knowledge to model a figure in clay in the round from the life. Some are of the opinion that it is more difficult to model perfectly a basso-relievo, but there is no end to the work in the round.

I am really inclined to think that ever since the Italian Renascence the sculptor's and modeller's art and aims have dominated methods of art teaching generally, and have been chiefly responsible for what I have termed the Academic method, which seems mainly addressed to the imitation of solid bodies in full relief, or projection in light and shade on a plane surface, which method indeed in painting, at least, is quite opposed to the whole feeling and aim of Decorative art.

In architecture, on the classical and Academic method, the young student is put through the

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School,
Instructor in
Lettering
Mr. Johnson

Page of Text,
written by
J. P. Bland

five orders, and is expected to master their subtle proportions before he can appreciate their artistic value, and with but a remote chance of making such knowledge of practical value, in a country and climate to which such architectural features are generally unsuitable.

Our methods of art teaching have sailed along in this stately way from time immemorial. Does not Burlington House stand where it did?

At all events a new spirit is abroad, since arts and handicrafts of design have asserted themselves.

Methods of art teaching in relation to design must at any rate be definite enough. Each art presents its own conditions and they must be signed, sealed, and delivered at the gate, before any triumph or festival is celebrated within.

Such conditions can be at least comprehended and demonstrated; materials can be practised with and understood, and even if invention in design can never be taught, on the negative side there are certain guides and finger-posts that may at least prevent lapses of taste, and loss of time.

The designer may learn what different means are at his disposal for the expression of line and form; for the colour and beauty of nature, re-created in the translucent glass or precious enamel, or speaking through the graphic printed line or colour of the wood-block—eloquent in a thousand ways by means of following the laws of certain materials in as many different arts.

What are the qualities demanded of a designer in such arts? quickness of invention and

hand, power of direct definition of form. The expressive use of firm lines; sensitive appreciation of the value of silhouetted form, and the relief and effect of colours one upon another; perception of life and movement; knowledge of

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School
under Prof.
Lanteri



Panel by
Vincent Hill

the growth and structure of plants; sense of the relation of the human form to geometric spaces, and power over its abstract treatment, as well as over the forms of the fowls of the air and beasts of the field.

This is a glimpse of the vista of the possibilities of teaching methods opened up by the

arts of design, and in so far as those arts are understood and practised and sought after as important and necessary to the completion of a harmonious and refined life, so will our methods of art instruction have to adapt themselves to meet those new old demands.

NOTE ON TOLSTOI'S "WHAT IS ART?"

COUNT TOLSTOI'S book is, for the most part, a very fierce and trenchant attack upon modern, as well as some ancient art, from the point of view of a social reformer and an ascetic and iconoclastic zealot. In a true Christian spirit he denounces nearly everybody and everything, and indeed, metaphorically speaking, and to his own satisfaction at least, first sacks and burns the houses of the aesthetic philosophers from Baumgarten to Grant Allen, flinging their various definitions of beauty to the winds; and he proceeds to make a bonfire of the most eminent names and works, both ancient and modern, including Sophocles, Euripides, Æschylus, Chavannes, Dante, Tasso, Milton, Shakespeare, Raphael, Michael Angelo's "Last Judgment," parts of Bach and Beethoven; Maeterlinck, Verlaine, Mallarmé, Puvis de Chavannes, Klinger, Böcklin, Stück, Wagner, Liszt, Berlioz, Brahms, and Strauss;—no English need apply, I about to say, but he includes Burne-Jones. And then, waving his torch, he points

Note on Tolstoi's "What is Art?"

to the regeneration of art in the regeneration of Society, tempered by the opinion of the plain man and—leaves the question still burning.

Of an ideal of beauty in art he will have none. Beauty appears to his ascetic mind (or mood) as something synonymous with pleasure, and therefore more or less sinful and to be avoided: yet, realist as he appears to be at times, he is quite as vague and idealistic as the idealists. He scorns when he speaks of a "Christian art" which is to take the place of modern corruptions. Tolstoi's view of art, too, is practically limited to literature, the drama, music, painting, and sculpture. (I am afraid he did not know of the Art Workers' Guild when he wrote his book, and seems ignorant of William Morris and the English movement.)

Only towards the end of the work (p. 171) does he mention "ornamental" art, or rather he speaks of "ornaments" (including "Chinese dolls") and remarks that such as these "for instance, ornaments of all kinds are either not considered to be art, or considered to be art of a low quality. In reality" (however, he says), "all such objects, if only they transmit a true feeling experienced by the artist and comprehensible to everyone (however insignificant it may seem to us to be) are works of real good Christian art."

He then becomes aware, recalling his denial of "the conception of beauty" as supplying "a standard for works of art" that he is in an inconsistent position, and turns round and says that

... "other of all" kinds of ornamental beauty, not in the beauty, but in the feeling of admiration of, and delight in, the combination of lines and colours) which the artist has experienced and with which he infects the spectator." This seems to be a cumbrous and roundabout way of saying that the thing is beautiful because it is beautiful.

Tolstoi, however, seems to have a rooted idea that there is something essentially selfish and exclusive about the conception and ideal of Beauty and that it must be something necessarily exclusive, appealing only to a privileged or cultured class. He condemns the beauty which appeals to a few, but admits that which appeals to many, though not because of its merit, but because it unites so many in a common feeling of admiration.

The terrible word "infection" is constantly used by Tolstoi. We do not know how far this may be the exact meaning of the translation, and whether it is the best equivalent for the Russian phrase, but we know that it has not a pleasant association as regards the reception of ideas of art. Tolstoi's ideal of art remains what it was and what it always was—nothing but the infection by one man after another, or of others, with the feelings experienced by the infector."

He main point throughout—the combination of the power of art, and he values it, apparently solely for this power.

The power of infection, as he calls it, is the exclusive possession or distinctive characteristic of art. A man with a disease may

"infect" another, but you don't call it art. A fire may communicate some of its warmth to those who are cold, but we don't call it art. An angry man may punch you and infect you with his anger, so that you punch him in return, but we don't call it art—unless the art of self-defence is allowed to be an art.

It is true one is aware of the sort of physical test of good poetry—that it causes a shiver down the spinal column; and it is generally a true one, but whether it represents the shiver felt by the poet in writing one is not quite certain.

Besides, surely a work of art may communicate or suggest something more than was actually in the mind or emotions of the artist at the time, as by the power of association it may awaken different thoughts and feelings in many different minds.

To limit fine art only to those forms which are capable of appealing to everybody, and which communicate feelings and ideas which can be shared by humanity at large, must necessarily limit it to few and simple forms and types. No doubt Tolstoi fully realizes this, and he even recognizes that the art of the most universal appeal at the present day is apt to be rather trivial in form, such as "a song, or an amusing jest, intelligible to every one, or a touching story, or a drawing, or a little doll" (p. 165), and he elsewhere says that the producer of such things is doing far more good than the elaboration of a work to be appreciated only by a few.

Mosaic, romantic, or poetic art seems to have no attractions for Tolstoi. In fact, he jumps upon what he terms poetic art with immense vigour, and reserves his greatest vials of scorn for some of its modern exponents. He seems to have little perception of the law of evolution either in life or in art, which accounts for its very varied forms, and different spirit in different ages, and among different races and social conditions. Nor does he seem to recognize that every age demands a fresh interpretation of life in art. Form, spirit, and methods in art all change with the different temper of the times.

Tolstoi's havoc with the critics, and his accusations of the shams, imitations, and pretensions in many forms of modern art is sounding and often too true; and one feels in sympathy with his desire for spontaneity and unity in art, as well as for a social state, a co-operative commonwealth in which it might be realized that unity of purpose and effort upon which all forms of art depend has widest appeal.

Tolstoi's ideal of a state in which all contribute the useful labour of the community is well, and, of course, this would condemn life of monotonous toil or drudgery; and afford leisure for thought and cultivation of the arts by those who had the real interest in them; no one being attracted by personal advantage or material profits, since, under such conditions, arts would be the spontaneous outcome of life, and freely offered for

the good of the community in the joy of pro-
ducing it.

Tolstoi's real strength lies in his zeal for and advocacy of such a simple communal life, and this gives the real force to his arguments for a corresponding simple and universal art; and, indeed, one feels that it is this conception and his religious views that are always dominant in his mind, and existing forms of art are frankly condemned or approved so far as their influence is unfavourable or favourable to such views of life.

In a remarkable footnote on p. 170, however, he allows that he is "insufficiently informed" in all branches of art, and that he belongs to the class of people whose taste is "perverted," that "old inured habits" may cause him to "err," and he goes on to consign certain works of his own to the category of "bad art."

His deeply rooted idea that all good art must convey a definite message which can be universally understood gives the impression that he only values art in so far as this definite message can be read in it; and, by his denial of the validity of beauty as an ideal and object in art, he removes himself, curiously enough, from where his sympathies lie really, from the acknowledgment and appreciation of the far-reaching influence of beauty in the commonest things of daily life—things of use which the touch of art makes vocal—things without which even the Tolstoian ideal of simple useful life would be impossible, to which the spontaneous and traditional handicraft art of the peasant in

primitive countries has so largely contributed, and which reveal more definitely the character and aesthetic capacity and feeling of a people than whole galleries of self-conscious painting and sculpture.

OF THE INFLUENCE OF MODERN SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDI- TIONS ON THE SENSE OF BEAUTY

Of the In-
fluence of
Modern
Social and
Economic
Conditions
on the Sense
of Beauty

THAT modern conditions of life are destructive to the sense of beauty I do not doubt, yet I am by no means sure that sensitiveness to beauty—or to its absence—in our daily surroundings is so very common (or even that there is a common understanding as to the idea of beauty), that such a proposition would obtain general assent without further explanation, and, as I have undertaken to open the case for the prosecution, if I may so term it, I will try to make clear my reasons and conclusions on the matter.

My first witness shall be London, as London is typical and focuses most of the effects of modern, social, and economic conditions. Now we hear a great deal of the beauty of London, but probably those who talk of her beauty are really only thinking of certain beauty-spots. Vast as London is, most of us really live for the most part in a comparatively small London. Outside our usual haunts lies a vast unknown region, of which, indeed, we obtain occasional glimpses on being obliged to travel across or through the multi-county city.

These whose London is bounded on the west by Kensington Gardens and on the east by Mayfair, do not figure to themselves Clerkenwell or Ratcliff Highway, Bethnal Green or Bow, and would not care to embrace the vast New Albion spreading over the green fields in every direction, or even the comparatively ancient slums in the shadow of Belgravian magnificence.

In posing we approached our metropolis by means of the great railway lines—there is nothing to indicate we are entering the greatest and dirtiest city in the world. We pass rows and rows of mean dwellings—yellow brick houses with blue slate lids—crowded close to railway in many places, with squalid little gardens. We fly over narrow streets, and see the webs and net-works of railway lines, gas and telephone wires, myriad smoking chimneys, pots, steaming, throbbing works of all kinds, sky-signs and the wonders of the partially poster-hoardings, which pursue one another from station itself, flaring on the reluctant eye with ever-increasing importunity of vision, until one recalls the philosopher who remarked: "Strange that the world needs to be pressing to accept such apparently evident and sometimes startlingly obvious—truth."

The sense of architectural proportion inside houses, however large, is lost by the strident noise of all sorts and sizes; and images of all kinds and colours, stick, like huge butterflies, wherever likely to catch the eye.

The same thing meets us in the busier commercial quarters, a common device to hang the names in gigantic gilt letters all over the windows of the upper stories of the shops, while themselves become huge warehouses protected by walls of plate-glass, upon which apparently rest vast superfluous flats and offices, playfully pinned to the telegraph poles, and hung with a haphazard web of wires as if to catch any sort of better things that might escape the streets.

In the streets themselves a vast variety of sorts, sizes, and conditions is perpetually moving to and fro, presenting the sharpest contrast in their appearance and bearing. Here the spruce and prosperous business man, there the ragged cadger, the club idler and the workman. Here the lady in her luxurious carriage in purple and fine linen, and there the dressed-up seller of matches. Modern street traffic, too, is of the most mixed and bewildering kind, and the already perilous London streets have been made much more so by the motor in its various forms of van and bus, business or private. The aspect of a London street during the frequent blocks is certainly extraordinary, so variously sorted and sized are the vehicles wedged in an apparently inextricable jam, while the railways and tubes burrowed through the ground only add fresh streams of humanity to the traffic instead of relieving it. Yet the motor has been principally to relieve the congested



From a
Photograph
by F. Frith
and Co.

Of the Influence of
Modern Social and Economic
Conditions on the Sense
of Beauty

...
...
...
....

of London that the great changes have been made which have practically transformed the town, sweeping away many historic buildings and relics of the past, and giving a general impression of rapid scene-shifting to our streets.

The most costly and tempting wares are displayed in the shops in clothing, food, and all the necessities of life, as well as fantastic luxuries and superfluities in the greatest profusion—"things that nobody wants made to give to people who have no use for them"—yet, necessities or not, removed only by the thickness of the plate glass from the famished eyes of penury and want.

The shops, too, are not work-shops. The goods appear in the windows as if by magic. Their producers are hidden away in distant factories, working like parts of a machine upon parts of wholes which perhaps they never see complete.

Turning to the residential quarters we see ostentation and luxury on the one hand and cheap imitation, pretentiousness, or meanness and squalor on the other. We see the aforesaid brick boxes which have ruined the aspect of most of our towns; we have the pretentious villa with its visitors' and servants' bells; we have the stucco-porticoed town "mansion," with its squeezy hall and umbrella stand; or we have the desirable flat, nearer to heaven, like the cell of a cliff-dweller, where the modern citizen seeks seclusion in populous caravansaries which throw every street out of scale where they rear their Babel-like structures.

I have not spoken of the gloom of older-fashioned residential quarters, frigid in their respectability, which, whatever centres of light and leading they may conceal, seem outwardly to turn the cold shoulder to ordinary humanity, or peep distrustfully at a wicked world through their fanlights.

Many of the features I have described are found also in most modern cities in different degrees, and are still more evident in the United States, where there is nothing ancient to stem the tide of modern—shall we say progress? In justice to New York, however, one must note that there is an important movement there among artists and architects and people interested in municipal affairs in the direction of checking the excesses of commercialism and in favour of dignity and beauty in the streets and public places. Such publications as "The Municipal Journal" bear witness to this, so that there is hope for the future. So may it be here.

Turning from the aspects of houses to humans—take modern dress—in our search for the beautiful! Well National if not distinctive costume—except of the working and sporting sort, court dress, collegiate robes and uniforms—has practically disappeared, and, apart from working dress in working hours, one type of ceremonial, or full dress, is common to the people at large, and that of the plainest kind, with whatever differences of cut and taste in detail. I mean for men, of course. Among the undisputed rights of woman the liberty to dress as she

Of the Influences of Modern Social and Economic Conditions on the Sense of Beauty

pleases, even under recognized types of occasions, and with constant variety and change of style, is not a little important, and one that has very striking effects upon the aspects of modern life we are considering. It is true that liberty may be checked by the decrees of eminent modistes and limited by the opinion of Mrs. Grundy, or the frank criticism of the boy-in-the-street; and it is more than probable that the exigencies of trade have something to do with it also.

It is, however, too important an element in the ensemble of life to be ignored or undervalued in any way, as women's dress affords one of the few opportunities of indulging in the joy of colour.

Men suffer the tyranny of the tall hat, as the outward and visible sign of respectability—surely far more so than Carlyle's gig. Instead of "gigmanity," it has become tophatmanity. The "stove-pipe" is the crown of the modern king, the financier—the business man—he who must be obeyed. (I understand it is as much as a city clerk's place is worth for him to appear in any other head gear.) Ladies, too, encourage it—with the black frock coat and the rest of the funereally festive attire of modern correct man. I suppose the garb is considered to act as an effective foil to the feast of colour indulged in by the ladies—as black frames to fair pictures—black commas, semi-colons, or full-stops agreeably punctuating passages of delicate colour!

The worst of it is that the beauty of women's

whether it happens to be beautiful in modern life—now at present—seems to be a matter of chance and entirely at the mercy of fashion (or commerce!) here to-day and gone to-morrow, and who—tell it not among the pioneers!—

the woman, our only hope for variety in colour and form in modern life, in her determination to descend into the industrial and professional arena and commercially compete with man, not unfrequently shows a tendency to select out of his tailor's pattern-book, and to invent or adapt more or less of the features of this man's prosaic, possibly convenient and durable, but certainly summary and unromantic attire.

Well, I think, on the whole, the pictures of modern life in London, or any great city displays, may be striking in their composition, weird in their suggestions, dramatic in aspects—anything or everything in fact, beautiful.

The essential qualities of beauty being harmony, proportion, balance, simplicity, charm of colour, can we expect to find much of either conditions which make life a mere struggle for existence for the greater part of

men? Mr. George Eliot, in his "Looking Backward," gives us a strong and succinct image of modern, social, and economic conditions in his illustration of a coach and horses. The coach is capitalism; it is the minority; but even these struggle for life to maintain their position, frequently falling when they either go under, or must

help to pull the coach with the majority, toiling in the traces of commercial competition.

However these conditions may, among individuals, be softened by human kindness, or some of its aspects modified by artistic effort, it does not change the cruelty and injustice of the system or its brutal and ugly aspects in the main. But, if modern civilization is only tolerable in proportion to the number and facility of the means of escape from it, we may find, at least, the beauty of the country, and of wild nature unimpaired?

Do we? We may escape the town by train, or motor—running the risk, in either case, of a smash—but we cannot escape commercial enterprise. The very trees and houses sprout with business-cards, and the landscape along some of our principal railways seems owned by vendors of drugs. Turning away our eyes from such annoyances, commercial competition again has us, in alluring us by all sorts and sizes in papers and magazines, which, like paper kites, can only maintain their position by an extensive tail. The tail—that is, the advertisements—keeps the kites flying, and the serial tale keeps the advertisements going perhaps, and the reader is obliged to take his news and views, social or political, sandwiched or flavoured with very various and unsought and unwanted condiments, pictorial or otherwise, which certainly ruin artistic effect. Thus public attention is diverted and—nobody minds! But it is in these ways that the materials of life—whereof the sense of beauty and its gratification is no unimportant

have been destroyed, as it were, in getting our

way well, perhaps it would be truer to say,

in some cases, a substantial percentage on our

movements.

In-obedience to the rule of the great God
Trade, too, whole districts of our fair country
are blighted and blackened, and whole populations
are condemned to mechanical and monotonous toil to support the international race for
the precarious world-market.

Under the same desperate compulsion of com-
mercial competition, agriculture declines and
the country-side is deserted. The old country
life with its festivals and picturesque customs
has disappeared. Old houses, churches, and
monuments have tumbled into ruin, or have suf-
fered worse destruction by a process of smarten-
ing called "restoration." The people have
migrated into the overcrowded towns, increas-
ing competition for employment, the chances
which are lessened by the very industry of the
young-classes themselves, and so our great cities
are blindly huger, dangerous, and generally
deadly, losing, too, by degrees, the relics of
the interest and romance they once pos-

sess. In the arts and among the very culti-
vated of beauty we detect the canker of com-
mercialism. The compulsion of the market rules
and demand. The idea of the shop
and picture shows, and painters become
realized as men of science, and genius re-
quires as much puffing as a patent medicine.
One must have his trade label, and woe

to the artist who experiments, or discards capacities for other things than his label covers.

Every new and promising movement in art has been in direct protest and conflict with the prevailing conditions, and has measured its success by its degree of success in countering them, and, in some sense, producing new conditions. The remarkable revival of the handicrafts of late years may be quoted as an instance. But it is a world within a world; a minority producing for a minority, although it has done valuable work even as a protest, and has raised the banner of handwork and its beauty in an age of machine industry.

Other notable movements of a protesting or protective or mitigating nature are at work in the form of societies for the protection of ancient buildings—for the preservation of the beauty of natural scenery, for the abolition of smoke, for checking the abuse of advertising, for the increase of parks and gardens and open spaces. Indeed, it would seem as if the welfare of humanity and the prospects of a tolerable life under modern conditions were handed over to such societies, since it does not seem to be anybody's business to attend to what is everybody's business, and we have not even a minister to look after such interests. The very existence of such societies, however, is a proof of the danger and destruction to which beauty is exposed under modern conditions.

Social conditions are the outcome of economic conditions. In all ages it has been mainly the system under which property is held—the owner-

the means of production and exchange have decided the forms of social life. The power of capital and the power of the market are essentially modern developments, and commercial competition seems to lead to monopoly—a hitherto unequalled maxim. Modern life becomes an unequal scramble for money, place, power, or employment. The social (or rather, ~~un~~) pressure which results, really causes those respects, pretences, and brutal contrasts before. Private ownership is constantly subject to public interest, and the narrow point of immediate individual profit as the determining factor in all transactions obscures issues and stultifies collective action for the public good.

Sirs and gentlemen of the jury, perhaps I am bold enough to support the case of Beauty against modern, social, and economic conditions. You ask for damages—they are incalculable. Behold before you, a pathetic figure, obnoxious in shreds and patches, driven from pillar to post, disinherited, a casual, and obliged to beg bread, who should be a welcome and honored guest in every city, in every house, the lamp of art, and bringing comfort to all.

OF THE SOCIAL AND ETHICAL BEARINGS OF ART

Of the Social
and Ethical
Bearings of
Art

Morris

THE very existence of art in any people is itself evidence of some social life; and, indeed, as regards primitive or ancient life, is often the only record of life at all.

From its earliest dawn in the etchings of the cave-dweller, to the hieroglyphics of the Egyptian; the sculptures of the Ninevite and the Persian; from the marbles of Athens, and the spoils of Troy, to the moment and monumental beauty of the marbles—everywhere art (at first idea, language, or picture-writing) is eloquent of a mode of life; the ideas and ideals which held sway in the human mind, until they become precipitated, or crystallized, in antique architecture and sculpture, and in the sister arts of design. Until every fragment of woven stuff, every bead and jewel, every fragment of broken pottery still speaks of the past with its "half-obliterated traces" of the life and thought which have gone, of buried hopes and fears, of the loves



Abydos:
Temple of
Seti

strife, of the pride and power, which have left but these frail relics to tell their tale.

The keen, observant eye of the primitive hunter noted down unerringly the outlines of the fierce animals he stalked and slew. The same unerring perception of typical form reappears formalized, and more and more abstracted, in the hieroglyphic, which, using the familiar animals and objects of Eastern life as symbols, becomes finally cast, by use and wont, in the course of evolution, into the rigid abstractions of the alphabet. This, though in calligraphic and typographic art entering another course of development, has become quite distinct from the graphic and depicting power which appears to have been its origin; but they are still closely and constantly associated together in our books and newspapers, which form so large a part of, and so intimately reflect, our social life, and which have carried picture-writing into another and more complex stage.

The early Assyrian reliefs, too, in another way may often be considered as a series of emphatic historic statements—a graven writing on the wall. Their object, to record the conquests of kings or their prowess as lion-hunters, their battles and sieges, their prisoners taken, their weapons and munitions of war, the attributes of their symbolic deities. Their value was perhaps as much their descriptive and recording power as their decorative effect.

The archaic Greek passed through the same stage, only gradually evolving that exquisite artistic sense, until the monumental beauty and

humble ideality of the Phidian work is reached to pass away again with the spirit and the life which gave it birth. The wave of Greek civilization rises to the crest of its perfection, and comes and falls, yet spreads its influence, and leaves its impress upon all lands; unextinguished by the power and pomp of the Roman which succeeded over which, indeed, in the artistic sense it triumphs, springing to new life in Italy, until it is found wandering among the ruins and trivialities of Pompeii, where the last stage of ancient life has been preserved, as it were, in amber.

We may drop some natural tears over the death of paganism, feeling that at all events, though in its corruptions, it has placed on record in art that joy of life, and the frank acknowledgement of man's animal nature (which religion or philosophy can afford to leave out) and has reconciled them in forms of seeming refinement and beauty. A great deal can be set down to persistence of sunshine, but one glancing at what has been left us in the beautiful forms of art from the classical and countries must feel how much larger part art must have played in that constant and intimate must have been—from the storied pediment and frieze—
example, to the gilded statues and bronze—
in the public streets and squares—
on the painter's fancy is let loose—
colour, and overhead the blue sky
of Greece. There was at any rate no monopoly in the pleasure of such an

external life. The *eye* of the slave was at least as free as that of his master, and the mere common possession of the spectacular pleasure of life is something. We feel too that the ancient wealth of beautiful art was the direct efflorescence of the life of the time. Everywhere the artist's and craftsman's eye must have been stimulated, the forms of man and woman moving without the restraint of formally cut costume, but freely draped according to the taste of the individual or the demands of the *seasidé*, or circumstance. He could see the athlete in the arena, the beauty on her terrace, the philosopher in his grove, the colour and glitter of the market-place, the slave at his toil, the warriors clanging out to battle, and all these in the broad and full light of a southern sky. What wonder that his art took beautiful forms. Even the grave was robbed of its gloom by the Greek artist, and death was figured as a gentle and painless leave-taking between friends.

It is impossible to doubt that impressions of external beauty and harmony have a softening and humanizing effect upon the mind. I believe that we are unconsciously affected by such influences—that we are unconsciously happier when we live in pleasantly proportioned rooms, for instance, with harmoniously coloured and patterned walls and furniture. The nerves are soothed through the gentle stimulus of the *eye* dwelling on happy and refined forms and colours.

With the advent of Christianity, with the spiritual eye fixed upon another world, the form, with the spirit, of art naturally changed, and

though the main current of the new teaching was to make man indifferent to externals, after its first timid falterings in the dying traditions of classical design, we know that Christian art became one of the most powerful exponents of its creeds, and by the awe-inspiring influence of the solemn and mystic splendour of the Byzantine and early Gothic churches so impressed the imagination of men's minds that, other causes contributing, the Church became the great depository of artistic skill and inspiration, and used its power of emotional appeal to the utmost by means of noble and impressive architectural form and proportion, afterwards heightened by every decorative means at the command of the Gothic craftsman in painted glass, carvings, mosaic, painting and work of gold and silver and precious stones.

The church was inscribed within and without in the Bible history, and the lives of saints shone like suns to be shamed for an ensample to all in the language of the painter or the carver.

The evil-doer was terrorized by presentations of a very realistic hell, while the soul was lifted by ecstatic visions of angelic hosts and flower-starred meads of Paradise.

The Catholic Church was indeed a teacher and teacher of unparalleled eloquence and force. The unlettered could read its truth, the poor and the lame and the halt, even the blind might be moved by the "choir" and "pealing organ."

The grandeur and beauty of a mediaeval cathedral must have had what we should now

call quite an incalculable educational effect upon the people from the aesthetic and emotional side.

Besides this, the ordinary aspect of the towns must have been full of romance and interest: the variety, and quaint richness of the citizens' houses; the colour and fantastic invention in costume and heraldry; the constant shows and processions, such as those organized by the crafts' guilds, full of quaint allegory and symbolic meaning. A street might be soletin with the black and white gowns of monks and priests, or gay with flaunting banners and the flashing armour of knights, or the panoply of kings and queens. Great gilded wagons, bright with brave heraldry—instead of our black, varnished, respectable carriages, with a modest lozenge on their panels—though these have of late been rather put out of countenance by the more daring and dangerous motor car with its mysteriously veiled and masked occupants, a vehicle lately described by a wit as "a cross between a brougham and a battleship."

Well, between the ordinary wonders of its mixed and perpetual traffic, we in London have now nothing left as a free popular spectacle but the Lord Mayor's Show, or the Oxford and Cambridge boat-race. There is the poster, it is true—that cheap and generally nasty "popular educator." Not always so cheap, either, since one hears of Royal Academicians being secured for the service of pushing commerce at the price of a thousand pounds or so—though the result is generally not a good *poster*, but only an oil picture spoiled.

common life, however disguised or uglified with unnatural and inharmonious surroundings, must, of course, always remain intensely interesting. If we all took to wearing sandwich boards to announce our personal tastes or wants to save trouble, I suppose a certain amount of drama would still be possible, and I have no doubt we should soon have aesthetic persons declaring that it was as fine a costume as a mediaeval herald's or Joseph's coat of many colours.

It does not seem as if we could take art and beauty naturally in this country, since the puritan frost came over us. We have suffered from stiffness in our aesthetic limbs ever since. A pedantry and affectation which have attached themselves to some parts of the question seem to have created mistrust in the ordinary mind. The ordinary mind has been too accustomed to ugliness, perhaps—and habit is common to all of us. Conscious efforts to produce beauty are not always convincing, and a thing of beauty does not look comfortable without harmonious environment. If Venus suddenly rise from the Serpentine (or New York Harbour) she might be misinterpreted.

If we are ever to have beauty in our common life, beauty must spring naturally from its common conditions, just as beautiful art always springs naturally from its material. Now, it is often said that art has always been the minister to wealth and power, that it has been the private possession of the rich, and its dwelling-place

the precincts of courts and the shelter of great houses. If, however, the results of art (so far as the art which appeals to the eye can ever be monopolized) have often become forms of private property, this is only so in a limited degree, and is only partially true; and in regard to the later detached or pictorial forms of art, or in the case of antique bric-à-brac.

Art, in its nobler monumental forms, by the necessity of its existence, has appealed to the whole people of a city or state from a Greek temple to a Gothic cathedral with all the arts of design in retinue.

If, in later days, artists were pressed into the service of kings, great nobles, merchant princes or millionaires, and art became largely tributary to their pomp and magnificence, it was at least at the *expense* of the whole people. And as, by degrees, partly owing to commercial and mechanical evolution, and partly to the inducement of greater personal credit, social distinction and sympathy (which, after all, are parts of commercial evolution or rather, perhaps, some of its effects) the artistic faculty was drawn more and more into purely pictorial channels, and partook more and more of the nature of portable and private property, its actual possession became a matter, more or less, for the rich. Even in this stage, however, it has made possible splendid public and national collections—as our own National Gallery, for instance, where the very choicest works of the greatest painters of all time are the actual possession of each and all of us.

there has been monopoly of art, and of the masses of the people (the workers whose "social value" really pays for it) have been excluded from, or deprived of, its enjoyment and stimulating influence, is it wonderful that monopoly of art should follow monopoly of land and the means of subsistence? or that those who refuse to recognize, or to respect, common rights in land and common participation in the pleasures and refinements of life, should refuse to recognize common rights in art also?

The growing enlightenment and demand for justice on the part of the workers, and their growing power and capacity for combination through democratic institutions, will insist upon the abolition of such monopolies; and the spread of the feeling of fellowship and the inter-dependence of all workers will create a sounder public sentiment and morality in the matter of the uses of wealth and the social value of art.

I hope that we shall not be content as a people to remain satisfied with so little of the influence of art and beauty in our daily lives. We are beginning to realize the immense deprivation their absence causes, and they are not felt at all, where their warmth of the sun's, never penetrate, there is a want of sympathy, brutality, and degradation. It is a fact, that harshness and roughness of want of sympathy are usually found in absence of sensibility to art in individuals. Aesthetic sense, indeed, is like a sixth sense, added to the other five, or rather evolved. Yet we have, until recently, been

*Art for all
for a better
ethical purpose*

starved
for child

in the habit of shutting up our national museums and picture galleries on Sundays as if they were haunts of vice, instead of refining, intellectual and moral influences, and sources of unselfish pleasure. We allow the walls of our school rooms, for the most part, to be gaunt and bare, and give no greater stimulus to the children's and young people's imaginative reason than is to be gleaned from varnished, unillustrated maps and tame lithographs of wild animals.

But it is hardly surprising that the minds and imaginative faculties should be starved, when we know that the *bodies* so frequently are, as under our compulsory system of education it has been discovered poor children frequently go foodless to school.

Yet if common life was thought worth enriching by suggestions of heroism, poetry, and romance; if education was considered more as a means of developing *the whole nature*, than merely as a preparation for a narrow competitive commercial existence, might we not, from the storehouses of history and folk-lore, picture our school and college walls with great and typical figures of heroes, and founders and fighters for our liberties and the commonwealth, and make them glow with colour and suggestion? and I believe we should see its after results in a more refined and more spirited, more sympathetic, more united and self-respecting people.

Whether such changes can come before certain greater economic changes, comprehended by socialism, is another matter (I do not believe they can in their fulness), and I have no voice

to put the aesthetic cart before the economic <sup>or the Social
and Ethical
Bearings of
Art</sup>
horse, although conviction sometimes comes from attempting the impossible—or the right thing at the wrong stage.

The social character of the appeal to the eye is brought home to us by the involuntary impulse which, with a fine work of art before us, or some lovely natural scene, provokes such common exclamations as "Look at that!" "Oh! do look there!" "Did you ever see anything so beautiful?" and the like. This seems to show that people are not content, as a rule, to enjoy the pleasures of vision alone. They cannot look at a beautiful work without wanting to see it also, and participate in the emotional excitement and appreciative de-

Appreciation and sympathy are also, of course, seriously stimulating to artists. They are like the answering ring to the coin of his thought which casts it forth to the world, which tells him he has a true gold.

Works of art are like questions or problems which their inventor puts to the public at large. If they are understood at once then the artist knows he is in touch with his questioner, and speaks in a tongue that is comprehensible; but this is not always the case.

Conditions of the practice of art itself have undergone changes analogous to the evolution of society, the sentiment of which it reflects. From its earlier collective forms, typical forms, when all the arts of life were united in architecture with such

*not in non
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but relatively
the Tradition*

beautiful results, to its more individual and personal character in modern days, more especially in painting, we can trace an entire change of spirit. The focus of artistic feeling and expression is no longer centralized on religious mysteries, or mythologies, but is turned every-where on the parti-coloured aspects of human life, and the changes of the face of nature. Its methods are no longer traditional but experimental, and its point of view personal, so that the position of a modern painter is not so much that of a musician taking his place in a great orchestra, and contributing his part to a great and harmonious whole, but rather that of a soloist, who claims our entire attention to his performance on a particular instrument—it may be only a tin whistle, or it may be, of course, the violin in the hands of a master.

This condition of things in art has had its effect on the individual practitioner, and the tendency is to set up individual codes of artistic morality, so that each can only be judged with reference to his own standard, and according to the dictates of his own aesthetic consciousness, and this perhaps may be quite the reverse of that of his brethren.

In every direction, however, the practice of art teaches the value of certain virtues as means towards the attainment of its higher aims and ideals: conscientiousness in workmanship—doing all that is fitting and needful to obtain certain results: the necessity of making certain sacrifices of lesser beauty, for instance, of minor truths, to express the higher beauty and

the more significant truth; for it is no more possible to "eat your cake and have it" in art, than it is in the affairs of life generally.

Judgement and temperance have important parts to play in the making of the world of art; and that faithfulness to an ideal, and perseverance through all manner of technical and other difficulties and adverse circumstances, which carry a man through, and oblige him to exercise a certain self-restraint, to reach the goal he has set before himself.

So that the practice of art cannot be said to be without its ethical side, any more than its manifestations can be denied their social bearing and significance.

OF ORNAMENT AND ITS MEANING

THE decorative sense as expressed in the rich and varied field of surface ornament is now so much taken as a matter of course, and so associated with certain historic styles, racial types and climatic characteristics, that few care to look further into origins than such well-defined and comprehensive sources seem to contain, and doubtless did we know all about our historic styles (a knowledge of which every art student is expected to have at his fingers' ends) and could we thoroughly analyze the racial types and climatic influences of the world, we should know as much as could be known about ornament.

Ornament in its developed, or sophisticated and conscious, stage seems to me to have a close analogy to music of certain types, in which the sensuous delight in rhythm and melody, as well as the technical skill and invention of the musician, constitute the principal charm.

I imagine, however, that the pleasure a designer may feel in following out a germ of what I might call ornamental thought to its natural or logical development, and the pleasure

derived by the beholder from some harmonious or rhythmical arrangement of form and line are themselves developments from a primitive germ. It is the pleasure, or search for pleasure, of the aesthetic sense, which, from the first discovery of the fascination arising from a repeated form, or a recurring line, has been ever eager to extract from such simple elements fresh delight by greater complexity and new dispositions of the old elements, until the ornamentalist, or the student of pattern, finds himself in a vast forest of invention, complex and varied in its floral growth almost as Nature herself—an enchanted garden of decorative form, line, and colour—in which, nevertheless, the struggle for survival, or perhaps ascendancy, takes place, continually controlled by the stern schooling of necessity and utility—the gardeners with their pruning knives.

Yet I imagine, long before this conscious pleasure there was *wonder*—the wonder as of a child who gazes at the daily wonder of the sun, and covers paper with attempts at making circular forms.

Among the earliest scratchings of primitive man we get sun-symbols, we find meandering lines for water, acute points for fire, and zig-zags for lightning. These signs, too, seem at first used in a detached way, as if to convey to the mind the idea of the thing as words or names and not with any ornamental intention.

The Egyptians, as we know, afterwards developed this kind of sign-language in their system of hieroglyphics, and in the necessity,

perhaps, of making the forms represented extremely abstract and suitable for incision, while conveying as much character as possible, they also made them ornamental. The necessity, too, of compression, ordered scale, and control of space or boundary would naturally help the decorative effect. (See illustration, p. 89.)

But apart from this consciously ordered and systematic language of hieroglyphic, we may see the sun symbols and the meanders and zig-zags forming in repetition simple borders and types of ornament in the early art of peoples on pottery, textiles, or carved in-

The sign known as the Fylfot also, or  supposed to indicate the rotation of the heavens, and having a certain mystic significance, perhaps, to others less aware of its original meaning, was used as a mark or sign of good fortune, and thus (being capable of repetition and pleasure of recurrence) in course of time became incorporated into systems of ornament. It is found widely scattered and associated with many different types, being found in the art of both eastern and western peoples, and constantly reappearing.

The Greek fret, a type of border ornament frequently associated with the foregoing, and apparently surviving by sheer logical persistence, as well, perhaps, as its perfect adaptability to simple textile conditions, may have originally had the significance attached to interlocked hands. We know that borders of joined hands or fingers are still found upon oriental copper

dishes, and in association with the margin of or Ornament and its
the dish have an obvious significance, either as Meaning
the laying of hands before or after meat, or as
in the sense of the text "he that dippeth with
me in the dish."

In regard to the fret, however, there is a

Greek Cylix



Peleus and
Thetis

well-known centre of a Greek cylix painted
with a design representing the wrestling of
Peleus and Thetis, where the interlocked hands
take precisely the form, seen in profile, of the
border which encloses the (circular) design,
the unit of which may be discovered by anyone
who will interlock right and left hand and note
the effect expressed by the overlapped fingers.

Again, as I have elsewhere pointed out, the garland or swag so dear to the heart of the classical architect and designer, was originally the festive garland of leaves and flowers hung around the house or temple, as may be seen in the beautiful Romano-Greek relief of the visit of Bacchus to Icarius in the British Museum.

There appear to me to be two sources of derivation or meaning in ornament; *the Symbolic*, which I have touched upon, and *the Constructive*.

To the latter may be traced many of the forms in use as enrichments in the various orders of classical architecture, which owe their origin to primitive wooden structures, such as the dentil, the egg and tongue, the guilloche, etc. The volute and meandering borders so frequent in Greek pottery are traceable in their main lines to the primitive structural art of wattling. While the banded patterns upon weapons in the bronze age are, like enough, reminiscences of the tying and thonging, by means of which primitive man dispensed with nails.

That universal and indispensable pattern-motive and pattern-basis, the chequer, seems obviously to have been suggested by rush plaiting, or primitive weaving; and the knotted and spreading strands of the primitive mat, as it lay on the ground, may have been the germ from which a whole family of border patterns was developed which come to us from the ancient Asiatic civilizations of the East; but the type reached its richest and most graceful form in the hands of

the Greeks in their anthemion or honeysuckle borders.

The anthemion itself, taken singly, as sculptured ornament or finial upon a stele, I am inclined to think had a symbolic intention, and was intended to suggest the flames of the funeral pyre. In general form it is almost identical with the gilded metal flame haloes placed behind the images of Indian and Burmese deities, and recalls also the rayed flower so universal in Persian ornament, sometimes enclosing a fruit of the pomegranate type. Here again there is symbolic intention—life and the flame of life, with its flower and fruit.

Religious symbolism has, of course, played an important part in the history of ornament, and especially enriches the ornament of the middle ages, together with heraldic symbolism, which may be said to have been almost exclusively the ornament of the earlier middle ages—and very splendid ornament it was. What would have been those beautiful Sicilian silks, and the splendid thirteenth and fourteenth century textiles, without those "strange beasts and birds" which form such valuable ornamental units, and must have been reassuring and comforting upon the hanging or the robe, filling the owner or the wearer with the pride of ancestry, and the spirit of his fathers, as he recognized the family totem, or the badge and motto that had served well in so many a fight.

Apart, however, from both symbolic and heraldic origin and meaning, an important element in ornament is *line*, and line, owing to

certain inseparable association of ideas according to its quality, structure, or direction, must always carry definite meaning to the eye and the mind: the association of restfulness with horizontal lines, and ornament constructed upon such lines; the suggestion of fixity and solidity by the use of horizontals with verticals; the stern and logical character given to a design in which only angular forms are used; the expression of movement by the waved or meandering line—the line actually described by human action (even by simply walking, as we may note by marking the recurring position of the head of a figure so moving along); the lines of energy and resistance by the sharp irregular zig-zag; the lines of grace and rhythmic sweetness by gently flowing and recurring curves; or the lines of vigour, of structural force, of life itself in the radiating group, or the upward spiral of aspiration.

One cannot attempt to follow out all the suggestions, in a short paper, which the thought of the meaning of ornament arouses, but it appears to me, regarded as a whole, that we have in the world of ornament a language not only of extraordinary beauty, but of deep symbolical, historical, constructive, and racial meaning, and could we follow it fully to its sources, we should probably get as complete a history of the races which have used it as a means of expression, as we could do from any other kind of human record.

To the modern designer, accustomed as he is to play with what were once words and

syllables of perhaps vital import, *meaning*, in the ornament he may be called upon to fashion, apart from its own form or technical purpose, seems, perhaps, a vain or an inessential thing. But, while by no means confusing the purpose of art with that of poetry or literature, and fully allowing that to attain beauty and fitness is as much virtue as we ought to expect of any designer of ornament, or any other artist—if it grows, as it were, naturally out of the structure and necessities of the building, or of whatever it is the final expression and flowering—I still think that there are some thoughts, some suggestions, proper to design as a language of line and form, and that an ultimate symbolical meaning, however veiled, gives an interest and a dignity to any piece of ornament, as well as a certain vitality which it could not otherwise possess.

THOUGHTS ON HOUSE-DECORATION

Thoughts on
House-
Decoration

HOUSE-DECORATION, it would seem, is almost synonymous with civilization, and certainly has been co-extensive with its development in the world. The domestic interior, so far as we are able to realize it, and all that it implies, affords the best visible evidence of the standard of living and refinement, and sense of beauty existing among a race or people of any age or country.

In proportion as the conditions of human life become more and more artificial, and removed from nature, man seems to require the aid of art.

Decoration, indeed, might be regarded as a sort of æsthetic compensation for the increased artificiality, complexity, and restraint of civilized life.

Sheltered from the storm in a rain-proof, well-drained house, by a comfortable fireside, the comfort of a citizen who sits at home at ease is perhaps increased by the contemplation of pictures of wild landscape, perilous coasts, and even shipwrecks, upon his drawing-room wall;

but when the sun smiles and the long days come, something of the instinct of primitive man moves him, and he wants to be off to the woods and moors, seeking nature rather than art.

Thoreau, in his delightful book, "Walden," describes his endeavours to return to nature and reduce his life to the simplest conditions; he found the woods of Walden and its denizens, and the pond with its wild fowl, and the contemplation of the changeful drama of nature quite sufficient, beyond a little rough wooden shanty, with a bed, a chair, and a writing-desk in it. The only attempt at decoration he seems to have made was when he introduced some curious stones, by way of ornament, but quickly got rid of them again, as they needed dusting and arranging. Here he seems to have reached the zero of house-decoration.

Decoration with primitive and pre-historic man may be considered chiefly personal and possible. The taste for decorative pattern was gratified upon his own skin in the form of tattoo or war-paint, or in strings of beads, feather head-dresses, and the carved handles of his weapons. Not that modern man—still less modern woman—has given up personal decoration, in fact, I suppose feathers and beads were never so much in demand, but it seems that modern painters and decorators having provided so much more elaborate and sumptuous backgrounds they have to be "lived up." One has heard of the man (in "Punch") who was looking for a wife "to suit his furni-

**Thoughts on
House-
Decoration** ture." Well, the background is an important element of a picture, after all.

Cave-walls, though not neglected in primitive times, no doubt had rather severe limitations, regarded as fields for decoration, and until the art of constructing dwellings had been developed to a certain extent, it is obvious that mural decoration could hardly exist in any ordered form.

Tent-dwellers, like the Tartars and the Arabs, developed the mat and rug, the carpet and cover, and thus, on the textile side, made their historic contribution to an important element in modern house-decoration, as well as to certain typical forms of pattern well known to decorators; but the ancient Egyptian, with his plastered surface over the sun-baked bricks which formed the wall of his dwelling was, so far as we know, the initiator of painted mural decoration. The definite but abstract forms, the primary colours cleared by black outlines, and the resulting flat decorative effect of early Egyptian art, have set the abstract type for mural painting for all ages.

With the Egyptians, however, as with the ancients generally, the buildings most regarded for decorative purposes, owing, of course to their social and religious customs, were the temple, the palace, and the tomb. The Greeks and Romans, and the nations of mediæval Europe, broadly speaking, followed the same order, inspired by very different ideas, and under the influence of very different habits of life and climatic differences. The classic temple and the mediæval

centres became alike the depositories of the most beautiful decorative art. They are the great representative monuments of the art of the age and of the races that produced them, truly collective and typical.

The individual citizen under Greek, Roman, and especially Christian ideas, and the development of commerce becoming of more and more importance, would the private house considered more and more as a field for the decorator's art, and for the expression of individual feeling and taste.

As regards walls, fresco and tempera painting appear to have been the chief and most general methods of decoration from classical times to the middle ages, and it is still to those methods we look for the higher forms of mural work.

The remains of Pompeii, disclosed from beneath their pall of volcanic ashes, have furnished a mass of examples to the mural painter, and, indeed, the influence of the Roman and Pompeian ways and methods of treatment seems to have remained almost traditional with the Italian decorator, who has never lost his skill as a workman at tempera painting, though one may not always be able to admire his taste.

But, in regard to such a marked and distinct style of decoration as the Pompeian, one cannot help feeling that in the endeavour (which has often been made) to adapt such types of decoration to modern domestic interiors there is an uncomfortable feeling of anachronism and incongruity. The style, the fancy, the colour, the treatment,

the motives, all belong so essentially to another race, and to a different climate. To live surrounded by such imported decorations would be like masquerading in classical costume, and, indeed, to be consistent, the dwellers in a Pompeian room ought to pose in classical draperies, and endeavour to emulate an Alma-Tadema picture in the aspects of their everyday life.

Every race and every age, however, acted upon by all sorts of influences, climatic, social, economic, commercial, political, historic, evolves its own ideas of home and comfort—and appropriate decorative surroundings as a necessary part of home and comfort. These, in the long run, are the *fittest* to the circumstances and conditions, but by no means always ideally *the best*, in fact, but rarely so, being the result, as a rule, of certain compromises; but the forces which fashion our lives and characters, which determine our habits and pursuits, also determine the character of our surroundings.

The very ideas of home and comfort which one might consider more fixed and permanent—more traditional—than most human notions, seem, with the increased complexity of modern life, especially on the lines of the present development of large cities, or commercial centres, liable to change. The practice of living in flats and residential hotels must surely tend to displace or modify in the mind of the ordinary citizen the older ideas of what constitutes the completeness and organic relation proper to an independently constructed dwelling. The con-

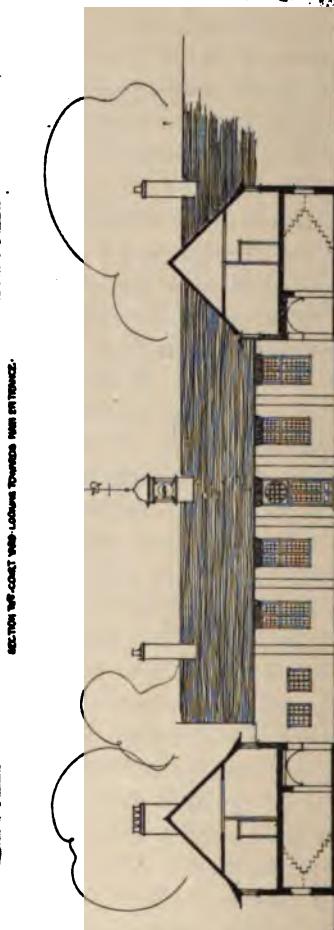
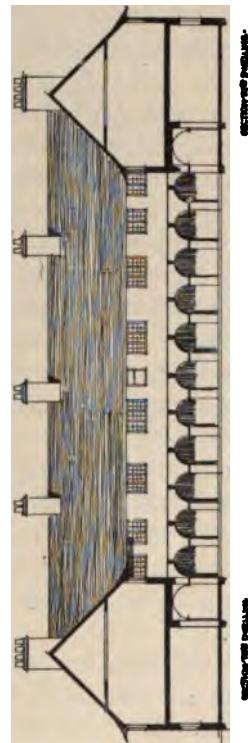
traction of space, and sometimes of light, commonly associated with flats, cannot have a favourable physical effect, and the impossibility of any garden setting—beyond a window box—must again, one would think, affect both the general health as well as a healthy sense of decoration.

The decorative designer certainly depends largely for freshness of inspiration and suggestion in design and colour upon growing plants and flowers, upon the sight of birds and animals, of the ever-changing sea and sky, and the colours of the landscape. If the sense from which is produced the very elements of decoration thus requires to be kept alive and in health, surely the sense which appreciates the product, which selects and uses, needs also similar access to nature to preserve a healthy tone. But having provided small brick boxes with slate lids as homes for our people, and packed them together in straight rows all alike on the eligible building land of our towns, we next proceed to economize space (and secure more unearned increment to the square foot) by packing such boxes one on the top of the other and calling them "mansions" or "residential flats."

On the other hand the collective dwelling, of which perhaps we see the germ in the better modern flats, with a common kitchen and dining-hall, may have an important future, there is no reason why, given favourable circumstances, good sites, and ample ground and space, dwellings on the plan of collective living,

Sketch for
Collective
Dwelling
containing
Sixteen Cottages with
Common
Dining-hall,
Kitchen, etc.
 $\frac{1}{4}$ " Scale

By Lionel F.
Crane

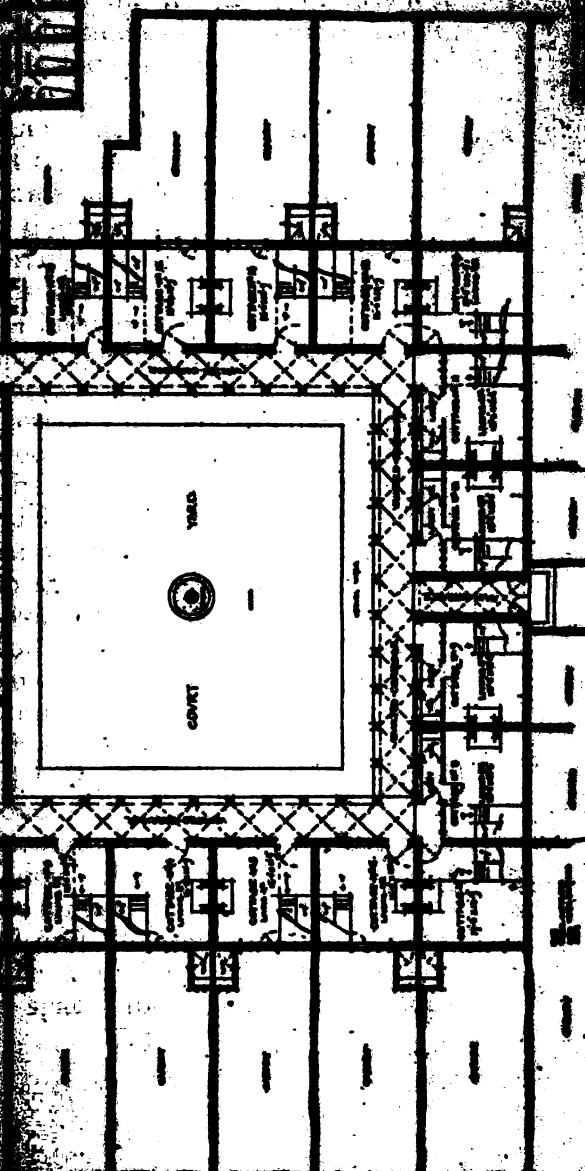


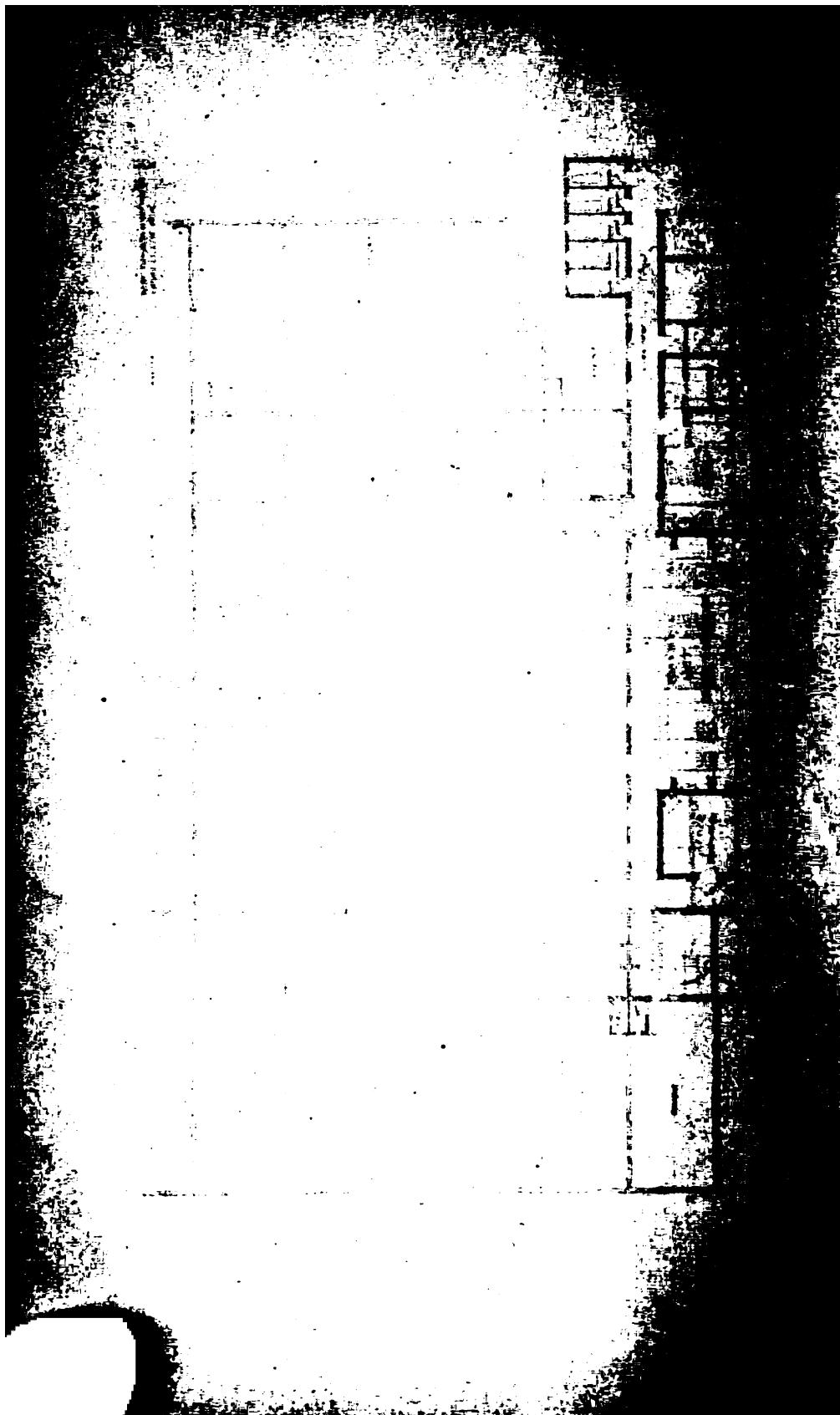
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co-operative homes, should not have dignity and beauty, as well as the comforts of a home combining provision for the necessity of privacy, with the social advantages of a common room, and the economic and continuous advantages of a common kitchen.

It should mean that the administration, the housework, and the cooking would be done by trained hands, and one would suppose that the load of care to devise the recurring scheme of the daily dinner, etc., now so generally pressing on the poor housewife, might thus be lifted, and a great waste of individual effort saved.

The old plan of the quadrangle would be an excellent one for a co-operative dwelling: one side of the square or wing opposite the entrance gate might be occupied by the dining-hall and public rooms, the other sides might contain the private rooms or be divided into separate dwellings with separate private entrances on the outer sides: on the inner side connected by a cloister which would enable the occupants of the private rooms or separate dwellings to pass to the public rooms at the head of the quad. A formal garden might occupy the centre of the quadrangle with a fountain in the centre. Such a scheme has, I believe, already been proposed to be tried in one of the London suburbs.

From the decorator's point of view the plan and scale of such collective dwellings might afford the scope for art: the large public rooms such as the hall and the common dining-room, might be simple and dignified with panelled walls leaving space above for a continuous

Frescoes by
Ford Madox
Brown



Town Hall,
Manchester

Utopia

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Painted by
Paul Manship
Drew



* THE PROCLAMATION REGARDING WEIGHTS AND MEASURES A.D. 1560 *



* DALTON COLLECTING MARSH FIRE GAS *



Town Hall,
Manchester

frieze of figures, or divided into separate subjects illustrating local history or legend, poetry, romance, or symbolism of life and nature.

The true place, however, for the decorative perpetuation of local history and legend is the Town Hall, and it is satisfactory to know that this principle has been thoroughly recognized in at least one important city of England and in a modern Town Hall. I allude to the frescoes of Ford Madox Brown which vividly and dramatically illustrate the history of Manchester and her worthies, and appropriately decorate the walls of the City Hall.

In Birmingham, also, I believe a scheme of painted panels has been devised to illustrate local history, and students of the Municipal School of Art have competed for the design of these. This seems an excellent idea which might be generally adopted. Every town which has municipal buildings and a municipal school of art might do much not only to stimulate public spirit and local feeling, but also materially to help young students and designers by giving them an opportunity of doing public work and thus getting practice in the highest kind of decorative art—mural painting.

Surely if we have any pride of place, if we regard our towns and cities as something more than mere mills for money-making we must feel how greatly their interest and beauty might be added to in such ways as these, as well as public parks and gardens, fountains, trees along the streets, and seats and shelters. Indeed, having regard to the future of our race, and the import-

ance of space and open air and surroundings of some beauty to the healthy growth and upraising of children, it becomes a public question of pressing importance, this of the conditions of life in our cities, housing, and house and school building and decoration.

One remarkable demonstration or object lesson has been given, owing to the initiative energy and philanthropy of Mr. George Cadbury at Bournville near Birmingham, which I was afforded the opportunity of seeing the other day. He has proved, at least (even as William Morris did), that factory work may be carried on amid pleasant surroundings and means of recreation for body and mind, and that a working population can be housed in close proximity to their work in picturesque and cheap healthy dwellings, surrounded with ample gardens and pleasure trees.

The Garden City Association is also in the field with Mr. Ebenezer Howard's scheme for uniting agriculture, horticulture and manufacture, with beautiful and healthy dwellings in garden cities which will, it is hoped, relieve the crowding of our great towns, and bring back the people to the country with all the conveniences and advantages of well-organized city life, and moreover enable the inhabitants to become the collective owners thereof.

Rapid means of escape from towns which invention and commercial interest and enterprise have placed within reach of the town dweller—while they suggest that modern cities are meant to dwell in—by those who can

get out of them—may to some extent counteract the ill effects of an artificial existence, at least among some classes of the population. I think a certain restlessness is induced which has its effects—even upon decorative art. The modern mind seems more easily fatigued, to require more constant and rapid change. This restlessness, no doubt accelerated by the effects of grime and smoke, leads to a desire for more frequent change of colour and pattern in the living rooms, than formerly. This, it may be said, is healthy, because it is "good trade"—for the painters' and decorators' trade that is. One of the drawbacks of modern society, however, is the existence of trade organisations that are prepared to supply (on the shortest notice) any atrocity which may be invented—indeed, I am not sure that supply does not in some cases create demand, and I suspect that there is but a poor salesman who cannot induce people to buy what they do not want. There may be some passing whim or phase of public opinion or want of taste; but the circumstances in which are good for such trade cannot be expected to evoke much *artistic* enthusiasm. What is "good for trade" is not always good for humanity, either in the making or the using, of which we have often had evidence, but trade, or rather the modern fetish to which, apparently, all considerations are expected to bow.

Now, I take it, a painter or a decorator can only be primarily concerned with producing something of beauty, even if, owing to circumstances over which he has no control, it cannot be "a



View of
Bournville



Cottages at
Bournville

Designed by
Alex. W.
Harvey

Thoughts on joy for ever." Let his problem be of the simplest—the choice of a flat tint for a wall, for instance—the important element of individual taste comes in. This, again, must be checked by considerations of adaptability and utility, such as aspect and conditions of lighting in the room, the kind of room, its proportions and purpose.

We all know what a different effect the same tint has in full or in half-light, in sunlight or in shadow, and what transformations are effected in rooms by simply changing the tint or the wall-paper.

The effect, too, of the same tint upon different surfaces should be noted. Any texture or granulation of surface improves the quality of a flat tint, and for this reason wall coverings with a texture in them; such as are known under the name of Burlaps, are excellent, providing a variety of plain tints of pleasant texture for wall coverings, or admirable grounds for the decorator to work upon.

A good sense of colour, therefore, is of the first importance. A knowledge of how to produce certain tints; the effect of one tint upon, or in juxtaposition to, another; the effect of one tint and of different tints in the same light; the best grounds for different tints; all these things, in addition to the workman's skill of hand in laying on paint evenly, are essential parts of a painter's and decorator's training and equipment.

The complex elements out of which have been evolved our ideas of harmonious decora-

tion are not more complex than those out of which the varieties of the modern house have been produced. True taste, as well as common sense, would say, "cut your coat according to your cloth"—build your house and decorate it according to what you can spend upon it: let it represent your own ideas of taste and comfort, after due thought, and not be an imitation of another's, or of something in the mode which you think you ought to like, neither something costly because of the cost, or a cheap imitation of something costly.

How few houses seem to be built or decorated upon these principles. How few, indeed, build their houses at all, or have much choice in the matter—except perhaps that of Hobson, who must also have been a jerry builder.

There is an old saying that fools build houses and wise men live in them. However that may be, certainly town-dwellers are often like hermit-crabs, glad to creep into more or less inconvenient empty shells erected by former generations, happy if they succeed in adapting them to their own requirements more or less. In a book on architecture of about the date 1836, elevations and plans are given of "a First-rate House," "a Second-rate House," "a Third-rate House," and even "a Fourth-rate"—quite on the principle of railway carriages, but going one better, or one worse. They all present modest street frontages of about twenty feet, duly cemented and painted. They differ chiefly in the number of their stories, and consequently windows, but the plans and elevations are all

of the same type, slightly varied in the details. The "first-rate" house, though a little more ornate and classic in some ways is by no means a palace, and the fourth-rate house is not exactly a cottage; the second-rate is only a cheaper edition of the first-rate, and the third-rate tries to look like the second-rate, but is conscious of having only one window to the dining-room. All sport balconies to the first-floor front windows and iron railings, guarding the ground-floor and basement, only the fourth-rate has no basement. It is as if the architect started with one elevation and literally cut it down to meet the exigencies of second, third, and fourth-rate tenants—I had almost said passengers—and in strict accordance with the then building acts.

Those building acts, perhaps, are responsible for the monotony of our modern streets. Although they have in some respects been modified of late, houses in a street or road are obliged to dress up to a straight building line, toeing the mark like a file of soldiers. Or, perhaps, more suggestive of a train of railway carriages, which only needs a locomotive attached to the end of the row to pull them along, and one might hope, out of sight, also. There are miles of houses of this type still existing in our towns, notably London, for which in fact the designs I speak of were intended, but I have seen their like in Liverpool, Dublin, and elsewhere.

Though carefully graded in classes and adjusted to certain rentals, the aim of the builder has been to make each present, on the outside, an equally neat and respectable appearance.

This is thoroughly characteristic of mid-nineteenth century ideas, and the love of neatness has always been characteristic of the English. The compromise, also, between modest requirements, or shall we say, between 5 per cent. and a respect for the Five Orders, which the street frontages of this period exhibit, is equally characteristic. We see the last results of the wave of Greco-Roman taste which ruled from the end of the eighteenth century to the early Victorian time. Of course we have got beyond all that now, though the type remains, and in some cases even, with its remnants of style, affords a slight relief and sense of repose after certain flamboyant erections in terra-cotta and plate glass which have appeared in our streets, with the up-to-date builders.

The type, as I have said, of these middle-class dwellings remains, their chief charm as well as decorative point being in the design of the street doorway, with classical columns or pilasters and a fanlight often with a graceful design in leaded glazing, too often ruthlessly scooped out to make way for blank plate glass. We know those iron railings (protecting the area and kitchen quarters from the attacks of the soldier and policeman), the windows of the basement timidly peeping above the ground as with half-closed eyes; the steps to the front door whitened by successive generations of devoted housemaids; the more or less Doric front door; the entrance hall, or long squeezy passage with the umbrella stand as a principal decoration; the staircase at the end leading to the upper

**Thoughts on
House
Decoration** rooms; the dining-room opening out of the above said passage, with perhaps a dismal window in the rear, commanding a fine prospect of back yards, unless considerably veiled by ferns, or stopped out by some would-be stained glass. The bedrooms over, back and front, follow naturally from such an obvious plan.

Such types of houses, however out of date, ought not to be without interest to the house-painter and decorator, since they depend for keeping up appearances almost entirely upon fresh paint—and nothing is, as we know, “as fresh as paint.” Indeed, I have often noticed in London—from that commanding eminence the top of a bus—how the white-painted old-fashioned fronts with green doors of some of the houses in Piccadilly, facing the Green Park, donning new “coats” for the season, quite put to shame some of their neighbours—the gorgeous stone-built and marble-columned club façades with all the grime of a London winter thick upon them.

There is nothing like leather—I mean paint—after all! In fact, whether inside or outside, the town house requires constantly cheering up by the painter and decorator, but it must be the decoration that cheers but not inebriates—and there is a good deal of what I should call inebriated decoration about. Much of what is generally known as “l’Art nouveau,” for instance, belongs to this category—the wild and whirling squirms which form the chief ornamental unit, whether in surface decoration, furniture construction, wood carving, inlays, or

textiles—which was so much in evidence at the late Paris Exhibition, and in the pages of "The Studio," which is, moreover, generally on the continent considered to be English in its origin. In some of its forms it certainly does suggest a free translation into French or German of a kind of decorative art associated with the designers of the Glasgow school, but, no doubt, like all modern and mixed styles (like the melancholy of Jacques in "As you like it), it is extracted from many simples and compounded of many elements. It is said that the Emperor Augustus found Rome of brick and he left it a city of marble. I should, contrariwise, suggest that our decorator, supposing he found the woodwork of "a desirable residence" *grained*, should leave it *plain-painting*—beginning at the front door. Iron railings, it may be noted, in passing, are generally painted (perhaps from economic reasons) too dark a colour, which darkens still more in the smoke of towns. A favourite hue is a kind of beefy red, sometimes picked out with gilding, though this artistic touch is generally reserved for public buildings—or the public house. Graceful wrought iron-work of a light kind often looks well painted white or a light cool green, but ordinary Brunswick-green (of a middle tint) has a good appearance with the white window frames, reveals the door jambs of a red-brick house, the green being repeated for the front door and any outside shutters. Apropos of the heavy red paint so frequently used for ironwork, I think that the cylinders of gas-works (which form such

important items in the scenery of our house would be far less trying objects if we painted a discreet and retiring cool tint, and the light iron work supporting the columns painted white. I do not think this treatment ought to raise the price of our house, which would certainly elevate (or shall we say "raise") the gasometer, and it would certainly make a more agreeable and less prejudiced that these rotundas were not round of pressed beef waiting for us at Cormoran's luncheon.

But we stopped at a green door, with green jambs. Dear to some decorator-painters (and hands) is "graining." Wonderful, sometimes fearful are its results. I quite appreciate the skill sometimes spent upon grainings, an extraordinary imitation of costly natural woods, which a skilled grainer can produce even better than the ordinary painted deal. There are also reasons of economy, I believe, to account for the prevalence of graining—in an age of such tasteless, dishonesty and simple habits as ours (?). This taste, I have heard, commends itself to the quarters for the same reason that Dame Primrose in the choice of her new gown, namely, "for qualities that wear well."

Nothing can be a more delightful, durable lining for the walls of hall or room than oak panelling, but nothing, in my mind, can be more sordid and unpleasant than the woodwork of a room grained to imitate oak.

The one field where skill in graining and marbling would be appropriate is that of stage

Innston,
1a, Holland
Park.
Designed by
Philip Webb



From a
Photograph
by W. E.
Gray

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**Thoughts on
House-
Decoration** scenery and decoration, where the object is to imitate, and where the scene has to be changed in obedience to the demands of drama.

Few interiors are more pleasant than white-painted panelled rooms in eighteenth century houses, a mode which some architects have revived with much success. There is nothing like white paint for the work of modern rooms. It is the best colour for wall-papers, and though many attempts have been made by house painters and decorators to get variety of effect by repeating in the door panels of the doors some leading feature of the wall-paper, the eye soon tires of this restless result, and welcomes plain white paint, leaving it to the mouldings to give necessary relief.

Door panels are often considered as fields for painted or other decoration; however, door panels are emphasized in proportion to the walls would have to be quiet in paint and colour, so as to let the doors tell as their decorative points; in such a scheme they would naturally be balanced by a painted treatment of a wood mantelpiece and connected by a rail and panelled dado, or wainscot; on the other hand, with a richly patterned and coloured wood-work, if painted, should be kept in colour.

If our technical schools where house-decoration is taught, instead of devoting time and teaching methods of imitative graining, would endeavour to train the pupils to

**Painted
Decorations
Ranworth
Knot
Sergeant
Norfolk**



**Drawn by
W. T.
Cleobury**

**Painted
Decoration,
Ranworth
Rood
Screen,
Norfolk**



**Drawn by
W. T.
Cleobury**

Decorative
Designs
Based
on
Screens
Nov. 1908



Drawn by
W. T.
Cleobury

**Thoughts on
House
Decoration**

brush as decorators and encouraged to design and paint simple ornaments, fillings, and friezes, such as might be used in interior decoration, and train them to space out walls with simple sprays of leaves and flowers, decorated and painted by direct clean brush, should surely see better results. The spirit of such types as these from the screen in Norfolk, for instance (a best of mediaeval English work of the fifteenth century, drawn for me by Mr. Cleobury), also furnished the South Kensington Museum with a complete set of drawings from which they would be doing much more well as interesting work, work whose practical results ought to prove both pleasant and useful, both to house-painters and to house-holders. This might be suggested by prizes being offered for such work at exhibitions.

The attention now being given in our schools to brush-work, if wisely directed, affords excellent practice in decorative effects, by giving facility to young hands to make use of the brush, with its power of expressing form by direct strokes, ought to be an excellent aid and preparation for such an after training in practical painting and decorating as I have suggested.

Stencilling and the design of stencils, which affords excellent practice in pattern construction, has been developed of late years to rather a remarkable degree by our art schools, as the National

Pedder
Street
Birmingham
Road.
Bromsgrove
Worcs.



Drawn by
W. T.
Cleobury

**Painted
Decoration,
Ranworth
Rood
Screen,
Norfolk**



**Drawn by
W. T.
Cleobury**

competitions bear witness. There has been a tendency to over-elaborate this kind of decora-

tion.

Painted
Decorations,
Ranworth
Road
Screen,
Norfolk



Drawn by
W. T.
Cleobury

however, by complex patterns and the use
of shaded tints, which its conditions hardly

bear. Though a useful and cheap and method of decorating large wall spaces, and even temporary hangings, and for temporary decoration generally, it seems to have its limits, and is hardly fitted for positions to catch the eye. But I have seen it effectively used in large rooms and rough plastered walls of an Italian villa, associated with bold and rich brocade patterns of a Gothic type.

In deciding on a scheme for the decoration of one's house, one must consider what will be the chief decorative points, and endeavour to lead up to them. The choice of walls, for instance, would naturally be influenced by various considerations. There is first the pose and use of the room—dining-room, drawing-room, library, living-room or bed-room, &c., &c.; not—there is its aspect and amount of light. If the question be the colouring of a house, a reasonable scheme would be to have a comparatively simple and sparing of colouring ornament in the passages, staircase, &c., of the important rooms, but with some connecting links of colour lead on to the important rooms, which might be much richer, and vary considerably from each other. At the same time it is pleasant to jump suddenly from warm to cool tones, and a house or suite of rooms should be reasonably planned in either a warm or a cool key according to its character, situation and lighting. Much, too, would depend on the type of furniture, since house construction, decoration, and furniture, are properly all closely related.



Drawn by
W. T.
Cleobury

There is the question of pictures. There will never be a struggle for ascendancy between wall-paper and the pictures. Pictures must be considered as central points in the decorative scheme of a room and the colour and tint of the main field of the wall arranged so as to be fully harmonized to suit them. The tint must depend upon the tone and colour of the pictures to some extent, though grey-green or subdued red forms well against a background, or plain brown paper, is a very safe one. A white wall, however, gives more distinction, and pictures in gold frames look remarkably well upon white walls. One often sees old pictures hanging on white walls in old country houses, and they always give a fine and dignified effect. The little interior by Van der Meer in the National Gallery, besides being a little gem of painting, shows how beautiful a thing is a white wall, which is suitable for pictures and becoming to any room. One gets a more luminous effect in a white interior, and in our towns, where there is too much light, it is a good thing to have white gloomy corners.

Two other charming interiors, each typical and characteristic of different races, countries, and climate, may be studied in the backgrounds of Van Dyck's wonderful portrait pictures. In Jan Arnolfini and his wife, a Flemish interior of the fifteenth century, and again in the decoration of the house of the Virgin in Carlo Crivelli's "Madonna in the Chair," with all its wealth of decorative detail, which gives one an excellent idea of a Florentine

Painted
Decoration,
Ranworth
Road
Sutton,
Norfolk



Drawn by
W. T.
Cleobury

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pointed Venetian citizen's house of
century. Both of these are well
of our National Gallery.

Illustrations of these pictures are
book on "Line and Form," so the
repeating them here I give one from
Leyden's "Annunciation" at Mu-
cothek) which shows a charming G
with a wagon-vaulted roof, whee
a rich brocade hanging to the bed
interesting details.

Another delightful example is
nascence Venetian interior which
background of Carpaccio's "D
Ursula" (L'Accademia, Venice).

For photographs or prints a pale
looks well—a pale lemon or prim
lights up softly and agreeably at n
yellow may also be recommended
dark room. Even one fleck of sun
pale yellow wall has a marvellous
power and will illuminate the whole r
can agreeably complete the harmony in
or black and white, with a touch of orange
furniture and texture.

As a rule, in modern drawing-rooms
ing-rooms, there are too many colours
as too much furniture. The proportion
architect and the scheme of the decorati
have a chance.

"Elizabeth in her German Garden
of the charm of rooms newly distemper
papered, with no furniture in them; but
it might make a paper-hanger happy."

Flemish
Fifteenth-
Century
Interior



Lucas van
Leyden,
"The An-
nunciation,"
Munich,
Pinacothek

Thoughts on this would be too severe for ordinary taste.

House
Decoration

I remember a gentleman at Los Angeles, California, showing me with pride a villa he had papered with a gorgeous pattern with lots of gold in it. He considered it sufficient in itself, an end and not a means, apparently had no intention of adding anything to obscuring the design by pictures or furniture except perhaps a chair or a couch, so as to contemplate the splendours of the paper.

I think there is a good deal to be said for the adoption of the Eastern idea of a different arrangement of seats in modern salons—seats all round the room, facing the windows, with small moveable screens. Ladies who entertain would find a more convenient arrangement for “at home” parties, and with a parquet floor the young people could only have to roll up the rugs to change the room at short notice. The hall, or hall-parlour, of old English houses, no doubt, gave itself to hospitable and social gatherings, long tables and benches ranged along the walls, leaving plenty of floor space for games and dancing, while the ingle-nook invited the chess-player and story-tellers.

The revival of the hall or living-room, and the ingle-nook is a noteworthy feature in many country houses. In fact, in the design and construction of the small country houses or cottages built of late years, mostly as return-homes for workers in towns, artists and others, we find the most successful, attractive, and characteristic buildings of our time, probably. The cot-

cottages designed by Mr. C. F. A. Voysey, for instance, with rough-cast battened and but-tressed walls, green or Whitland Abbey slates,

The English
House
Decorative

Carpaccio's
"The Dream
of St.
Ursula,"
Accademia,
Venice



From a
Photograph
by Anderson

green outside shutters, and white casements, have the charm of neatness, quaintness, and simplicity, an utter absence of pretentiousness and show, and a regard for the character of their site. There are some charming cottages of this

type at Bournville, already referred to, by Mr. Harvey, the young architect of that town. I give one here of my son's (Mr. Lionel L. Crane) design—a timber cottage in the style of "Cottages Exhibition" at Garden City, in signing a country house, an architect need not be much less fettered than with a town site, and he can frame it in a garden, which is an important decorative adjunct of a country house or cottage. It is possible to make it fit into or even become a part of the scenery, especially if local materials are employed. Indeed, it seems to me, the secret of harmonious effect in building lies in the use of local materials as regards colour. The beauty of our old castles, abbey ruins, houses and cottages is greatly owing to this. We feel they are in harmony with the form and colour of the scenery, and have lost parts of these, independently of the time.

In the present awakening of the public mind to the importance of the housing question, and the want of substantial, comfortable, and comely dwellings for the people, especially in the country districts, much attention has been directed to cottage building, and a practical effort is being made by the Garden City Association to solve the question in the competitive exhibition in cottage design and building they recently organized. The question is, as usual, complicated by the commercial question of profit and percentages on invested capital.

Were the object solely the national welfare,

Cottage in
the Garden
City, Letch-
worth, Herts



Architect,
Lionel F.
Crane.
Builder,
Frank New-
ton, Hitchin

*Interior of
Cottage at
Leitchworth*



Architect,
Lionel F.
Crane. The
Furniture by
A. Heal
(Messrs.
Heal and
Son)

Interior of
Cottage at
Letchworth



Architect,
Lionel F.
Crane. The
Furniture by
• A. Heal
(Messrs.
Heal and
Son)

as it should be, cottages could be built good to live in and securly. Objections have been made to the location, but so far as I am aware these bye-laws intended to secure the minimum necessary to health and comfort, and in no way interfere with the erection of safe and sightly cottages. Thatch, it is commonly believed, in some counties forbidden on account of danger from fire (probably really caused by the use of low-flash oil in cheap lamps) for detached cottages with the use of straw and reed thatch (as Mr. Robert Williams pointed out) such danger is reduced to a minimum, and certainly there are thousands of cottages and barns, and even churches, in England which have lasted hundreds of years. Thatch, after all, makes an excellent roof, cool in summer and warm in winter, and pleasant to look upon.

How charming a cottage can be made when picturesque and pleasing though quite new when perfectly in keeping with its surroundings and fitted to its site, I lately had an opportunity of seeing in the neighbourhood of Leicester. I allude to a certain cottage designed by Mr. Ernest Gimson. The interior also was an illustration of how decorative rooms could look with hardly any decoration. This is a hard saying for decorators, but my impression was that whitewashed walls, plain oaken furniture, only relieved by William Morris's printed cotton in the shape of window curtains or loose cushions here and there, were sufficiently decorative.

Stonywell
Cottage,
Exeter



Ernest W.
Gimson,
Architect

sidering the designs and conditions of the house. With glimpses of the hill-side and the beautiful woodland beyond them seen through the deep-set windows, there seemed no need for landscape-paintings on the walls—bad news for poor frozen-out landscape-painters again!

The reign of the big plate-glass windows, I believe, is over, and certainly in such a room as ours one needs as a rule to be able to live really indoors. Certainly, nothing makes so much difference to the aspect and atmosphere of a room or house as the position and size of the windows. I have a preference for windows with plain-leading, and if the window is high, stained glass may find an appropriate place above the transoms, or in a recess where veiled light is needed, or plain glass where a view from within or without is desired.

There is no doubt a determined effort in the direction of a return to simplicity, both in designing, furniture, and decorations of houses. There is a desire for the more refined and cultured, as a reaction perhaps against the ostentation and luxury of the appointments of the extremely and absurdly rich, and the pretentiousness of the decoration of monster hotels, where coarse imitation of decadent periods of French art do not lack splendour, though even here of late the simple taste has asserted itself. There is indeed some danger that oak or green-stained furniture and whitewashed walls may come to be considered as outward and visible signs of an inward and



Stone-wall
Cottage,
Interior of
Living-room

Furniture
Designed by
Ernest W.
Gimson,
Sidney H.
Barnaley,
and Ernest
A. Barnaley

spiritual grace, when perhaps they
fashion.

"Have nothing in your house I
believe to be beautiful or what
useful," was the straightforward
great conservative revolutionist in
corative art and other things—W.
—and he certainly acted up to it
house.

As to the useful, there are no rules
about that. A room with a definite
character, and is always more or less
The kitchen is generally the most
room in the house, yet usually entire
of what may be called decoration,
of art are merely the tools of the trade,
bright brass and copper vessels, the
gleaming like polished armour from
walls. The rows of blue and white
dishes upon the dresser, and all the
sufficient hand tools of the cook's
easily make up an attractive Dutch kitchen.

The real aesthetic dangers come in
rooms which have no visible means of
sistence, so to speak. The dining-room, perhaps for this reason, is more successfully decorated than the drawing-room, and there is a sort of tradition that it should be warm in colour. Silver plate often gleams picturesquely from the sideboard, and the furniture is bold and massive in its lines. An old English dining-room, with Chippendale or Sheraton furniture, has a character and distinction of its own. A library, again, is almost sure to look a habitable



Old English
Farmhouse
Interior
(1880)

From a
Sketch by
Walter
Crane

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room, and there are few more agreeable objects to walls than books, and here we must depend upon the taste of the binders, as well as upon the furniture provided for the mind. There may however, be room for the professional decoration upon the ceiling, and I mind me of the plaster ceilings to be met with in sixteenth century houses, sometimes armorial and emblematic—such as those at Knole and Hardwick. In plaster work we have a better permanent kind of decoration which was known in Italy, but which seems to have become domesticated here, and to have developed its forms with us. The plain white, flat ceiling of the ordinary modern dwelling-house is the most common, and even this used to have a big pipe-screwed up in the middle, from which issued the gaselier; but one need not regret the parture of both excrescences in favour of clean and pendulous shaded electric lights. Light and simple brass or copper fittings will be welcome. Plasterers, however, might be able to invent some delicate ribs or pleasant spacing of sprays and devices upon the inviting plaster. Let us paint white plaster over our heads, or, if not, why not let the joists show and paint or stencil them in running leaf patterns, or paint them black, leaving white plaster between? Mr. George Walton, one of the most tasteful and original decorators in the newer mode, and under the Glasgow influence, showed a new treatment of a ceiling in glass and metal, together with a completely decorated and fitted interior at the recent Glasgow Exhibition. A plaster ceiling demands a frieze,

and both may be effective either plain or coloured. This would depend upon whether a light, dark, or rich effect were required in the room. There is much charm in the coloured treatment of plaster, especially of figure designs in low relief as in the work of Mr. Anning Bell,

Combe Bank,
Sevenoaks,
the Saloon

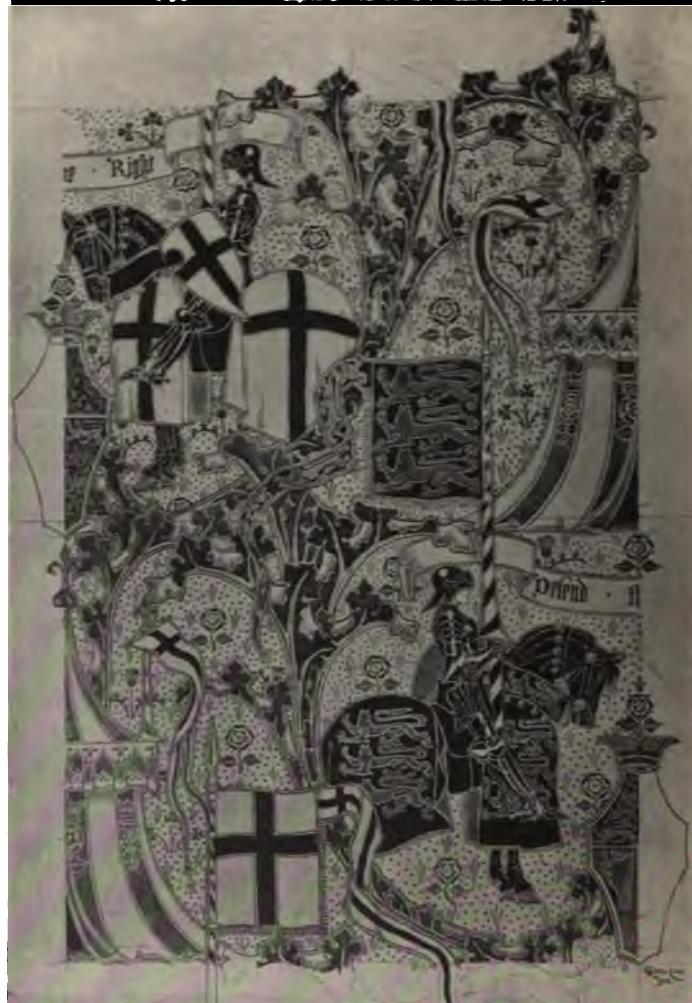


The Stamped
Leather,
Plaster Cell-
ing, Chimney
Breast,
smaller
Frieze
Panels, and
Door Panels
Designed,
Modelled,
and Painted
by Walter
Crane

Mr. Pomeroy, and Mr. Gerald Moira, though these require large rooms, public halls, or churches.

I have designed decorations (ceilings and friezes) in plaster and in stucco, and gesso worked *in situ*. These, in several instances, were gilded or silvered and lacquered so as to pro-

Printed
Cretone
Hanging,
"Demand the
Right"



Designed by
Walter Crane



Designed by
Walter Crane

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M

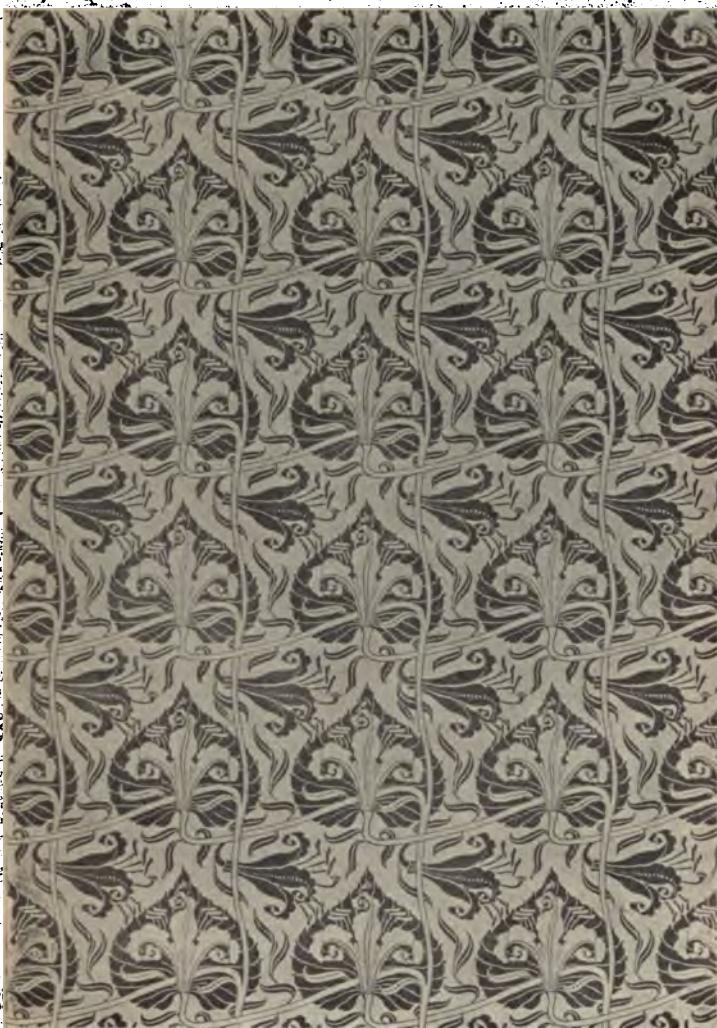
duce a low-toned metallic effect. This ornament harmonizes with richly coloured and rather dark-toned walls hung with silk or Spanish leather; but these were by no means cottage interiors.

For a cottage or small country house, printed cretonne, used as hangings for the lower walls of a room, has an attractive effect if suitable in pattern and colour, having a fresh, clean, and even gay effect with white woodwork and furniture.

The most comfortable, and at the same time the most romantic, also, I fear it must be added, the most expensive, way of decorating walls is by hanging them with arras tapestry such as that produced by William Morris. The dining-room of the English House at the last Paris Universal Exhibition was panelled in oak up to about six or eight feet, and the space above to the cornice was hung with Morris arras tapestry, designed by Burne-Jones and himself, showing the legend of King Arthur's knights and the Holy Grail. The simplicity, yet richness and dignity of effect has a striking contrast to the more clamorous decorations of some of its neighbours, among which, however, the Spanish Pavilion was an exception.

Complete schemes for wall decorations (including field, frieze, dado, and ceiling), can, however, be had in wall-paper, which, with plain painting for the modest citizen, remains the chief method of interior mural decoration.

A frieze usually heightens and lightens the effect of a room, and its junction with the field



Designed by
Walter Crane

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**Thoughts on
Home
Decoration**

**Wall-paper,
"Dawn"**

**Designed by
Walter Crane**

can be utilized for a picture-rail frieze, from the picture-rail to the ceiling being covered with rich or quiet patterns, according to the particular scheme may demand.



patterned frieze does well above a picture-rail, and above a wall.

I venture here to give some illustrations of some of my recent wall-paper designs, with the permission of the makers, Messrs. Smith & Hawes, and Co.

Walter Crane
Illustrations
and Designs
Book Plates



Designed by
Walter Crane

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The blue and white lily pattern would be suitable where a bold effect was desired for a dado or field of lower panels, plain white, or a quiet frieze above. It would be useful in halls and passages.

The rather ornate design called "Dame of the Figure medallion, might be used for a dining-room in quiet tones. The blue and the gold being re-echoed in the hangings and furniture, with white wood-work.

The "Rose Bush" would be appropriate for a dining or living-room where a rather more rich effect was aimed at. It would harmonize with oak framing and furniture.

The "Olive Spray" might be generally useful, and would answer as a background for pictures.

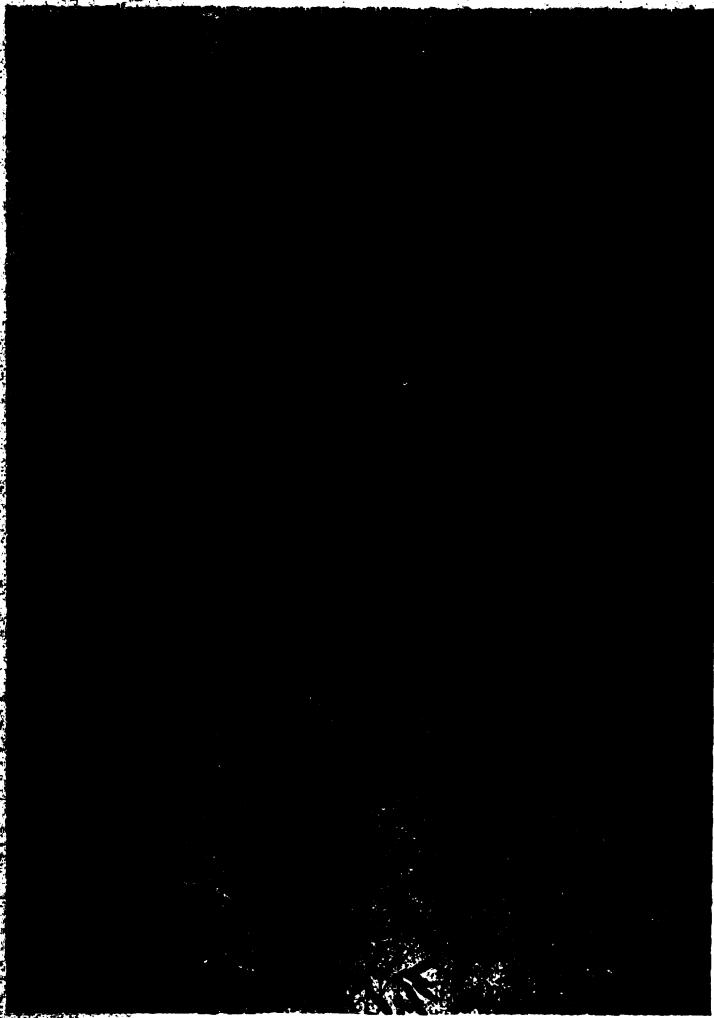
When wall-paper is used for ceilings it should be comparatively quiet.

I have found the "Vine Trellis" pattern a good effect with a plain tint on the walls, and is especially useful in covering the blank and ugly plastered soffit of the ceiling, which so often meets the eye in a town of the older type.

"The Cockatoo" would answer in a room where an ornate effect was desired. It could be used as a frieze above panelling in a plain tint.

The "Oak Tree" is on simpler lines, rectangular in feeling, combining a bordered field with a frieze.

In choosing wall papers to suit particular rooms, regard should be had to the character of



Designed by
Walter Crane

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Utopia

**Thoughts on
House-
Decoration**

**Wall-paper,
"The
Cockatoo and
Pome-
granate"**

the lines of the pattern as well as the colour, bearing in mind that a pattern which runs into marked vertical lines would tend to increase

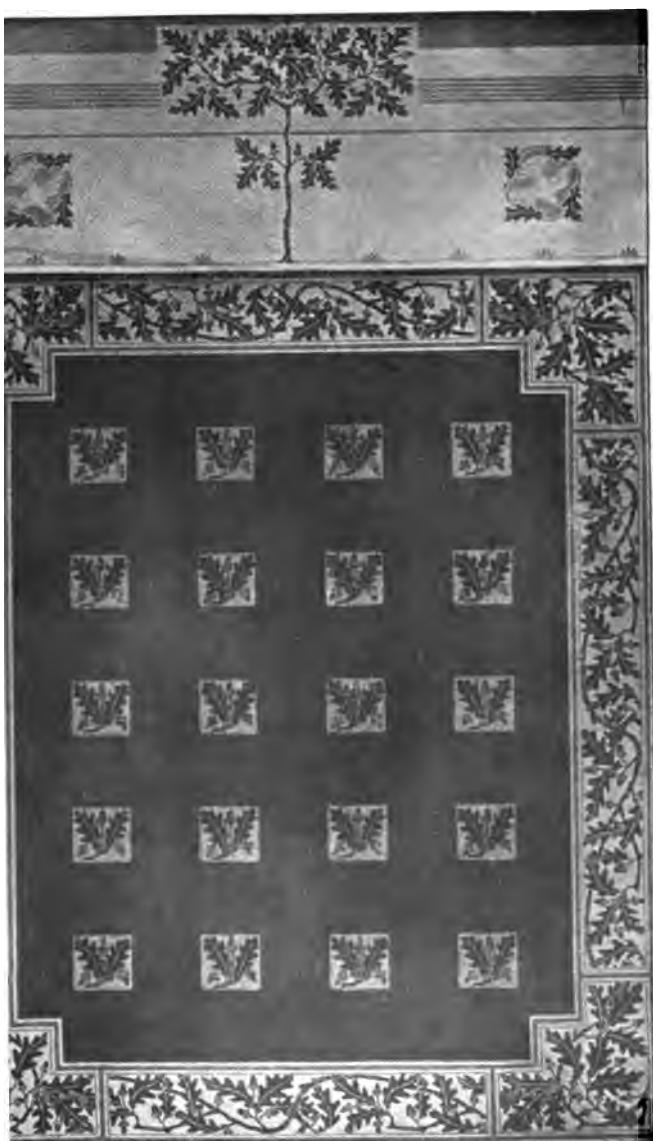


**Designed by
Walter Crane**

the apparent height of a room, whereas a pattern of marked horizontal feeling would tend to make a room look lower and longer.

In designing complete schemes for wall-paper

Wall-paper
Decoration
"The Oak
Tree"



Designed by
Walter Crane

Thoughts on House-Decoration one's aim has been to balance the different quantities of pattern in the different parts, to re-echo the leading lines, masses, and colours by different expedients, so as to keep an essential relationship between each part.

Relationship is, of course, the essential element in decoration, otherwise it becomes a patchwork of conflicting pattern and colour. It matters not what our materials may be, or by what means, costly or simple, we seek to obtain our effect; whether by painting, carving, gilding and lacquering, textiles, metal or plaster work, stamped leather, or wall-paper, stencilling, tiles and plain painting, or stained wood and whitewash. All must be well keeping, and seem fit and in its right place and proportion, and suitable to its conditions and surroundings; rich and splendid if the aim is to be rich and splendid, simple and quiet if the aim is to be simple and quiet; but without the presence of richness or obtrusive display on the one hand, or the extreme rudeness, baldness, and ugliness which sometimes accompany what is called like the affectation of simplicity on the other.

OF THE PROGRESS OF TASTE IN DRESS IN RELATION TO ART EDUCATION.

If taste in dress could be traced to, or its cultivation and exercise were solely due to, the influence of the constant study of beautiful forms and fine historical models in design, as well as of the living human figure, we might be justified in looking to our schools of art to give us the best types and standards in costume. There are, however, too many missing links between the ordinary art student and the practical designer, between the tasteful person and the leader of fashion, to enable us to prove a close connection of cause and effect in the matter.

No doubt the general and extended cultivation of a knowledge of art even on the ordinary art school lines has contributed not a little to the general interest in artistic questions, and quickened the average eye to some extent; but it must be said that we have not yet succeeded in making our schools of art remarkable as sources of invention, of initiative, or, on the whole, distinguished for capacity of artistic selection. We should be expecting too much, per-

haps, to look for these things in
grounds. We ought to be satisfied
mately turn out a fair average of men
or, rather, enable students to be
artists.

Even if all schools were equally
in respect of models and teaching
the present system there is practically
margin left by the regime of the
Education for individual experim-
quiry off the main lines of the prescribed
of study in which passes or hoours
able.

The courses and classes of study
in certain stereotyped ways, so that
an object to attain a certain me-
ficiency in certain methods of draw-
representation of a certain range of
order to obtain certificates, rather than
vate the sense of beauty in individual
view to the public benefit and the real
standard of taste.

These defects are, it seems to me, inherent
from any attempt to teach art and taste
(that is to say by precept and principle
than by practice), and upon a uniform
directed from a central department.
organization must necessarily tend to be
rigid and work according to routine.
administrators' best faculties are apt to be
much absorbed in mastering the detailed
rules of the system itself, and in the carrying
of it, to be able to think out, much less
vivifying changes from time to time.



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Of the
Progress of
Taste in
Dress in
Relation to
Art Educa-
tion

At certain stages, no doubt, by the action of expert opinion, such a Department may be of service to the schools of the country, especially in setting up a standard of taste, and advancing it from time to time by means of national competitions, which are the means of instituting instructive comparisons between the work of different schools.

But the real educating after influence, inspiring and refining sources of artistic instruction in design must be found in the splendid array of examples of ancient art of all kinds in our museums and galleries—which are infinite in artistic wealth to the student and the designer.

Yet the most ordinary art-school training cannot be without its effect, even if only negative. The mere practice of cultivating the sense of observation and uniting it with a certain power of depicting form is an education in itself, which gives people fresh eyes for nature and life.

The mere effect upon the eye and feeling of following the pure lines and forms of antique Greek sculpture, and the severe and expressive lines of drapery can hardly be without a practical influence to some degree even upon the least impressionable.

At all events, we have living artists, many of whom have survived the usual art-school or Academic training, and who through their works have certainly influenced contemporary taste in dress, at least as far as the costume of women is concerned.

I think there can be no doubt, for instance, of the influence in our time of what is commonly

known as the pre-Raphaelite school, and its later representatives in this direction; from the influence of Rossetti (which lately, indeed, seems to have revived and renewed itself in various ways) to the influence of William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones. But it is an influence which never owed anything to Academic teaching.

Under the new impulse—the new inspiration of the mid-century from the purer and simpler lines, forms, and colours of early mediaeval art, the dress of women in our own time may be said to have been quite transformed for a while, and though the pendulum of fashion swings to and fro, it does not much affect, except in some small details, a distinct type of dress which has become associated with artistic people—those who seriously study and consider of the highest value and importance beautiful and harmonious surroundings in daily life.

Beginning in the households of the artists themselves, the type of dress to which I allude, by imitation (which is the sincerest form of flattery—or insult, as some will have it) it soon became spread abroad until, in the seventies and early eighties, we saw the fashionable world and the stage aping, with more or less grotesque vulgarity, what it was fain to think were the fashions of the inner and most refined artistic circle. Commerce, ever ready to dot the i's and cross the t's of anything that spells increased profits, was not slow to flood the market with what were labelled "art-colours" and "aesthetic" fabrics of all kinds; but whatever vul-

garity, absurdity, and insincerity has been mixed up by its enemies with what is known as the aesthetic movement; it has doubtlessly did indicate a general desire for greater beauty in ordinary life and gathered many charming materials and colours which in combination with genuine taste, produced some very beautiful as well as simple dresses; while its main effect is seen, and continues to be seen upon the domestic background of interior fittings, furniture, furniture-fabrics and wall-papers. The giddy, aimless masquerade of fashion continues, however, perhaps not without a sort of secret alliance with the exigencies of the factory and the market, and it has lately revived, in part, the modes of the grandmothers of the present generation; but, as is often the fate of revivals, has somewhat vulgarized them in the process.

Modern dress seems to be much in the same position as modern architecture. In both it looks as if the period of organic style and spontaneous growth has been passed, and that we can only attempt, pending important and drastic social changes, to revive certain types, and endeavour as best we can to adapt them to modern requirements.

Yet architects are bolder than dressmakers. They think nothing of going back to classic or mediaeval times for models, while the modiste generally does not venture much further than fifty or a hundred years back, and somewhat timidly at that. Small modifications, small changes and adaptations are always taking

TYPES OF ARTISTIC DRESS.



place, but it generally takes a decade to change the type of dress.

Regarding dress as a department of design, like design, we may consciously bring to bear upon it the results of artistic experience and knowledge of form.

Now, a study of the human figure teaches one to respect it. It does not induce a wish to ignore its lines in clothing it, to contradict its proportions, or to misrepresent its character.

It seems curious, then, that the courses of study from the antique and the life usual at our art schools do not have a greater effect upon taste and choice in costume than they appear to have.

We must remember, however, the many crossing influences that come in, the many motives and hidden causes that bear, in the complexity of modern existence, upon the question, and the stronger social motive powers which determine the forms of modern dress.

Fundamentally, we may say dress is more or less a question of climate.

Pure utility would be satisfied if the warmth is fairly distributed, and the action of the body and limbs is free. The child with a loose tunic, leaving arms and legs bare and free, still represents primitive and classic man; and he often satisfies the artist.

But the child is free to grow, to get as much joy out of life as it can. It does not feel under the necessity of pleasing Mrs. Grundy, except perhaps when mud-pies are "off."

Primitive, again, and picturesque is the dress

TYPES OF CHILDREN'S DRESS

- UTILITY •
- SIMPLICITY •
- PICTURESQUENESS •



of the labourer, ploughman, fisherman, though purely adapted to use and service, make concessions to aestheticism, if any, only in the way of a coloured neckerchief, the broderie of a smock frock, or the pattern of knitted jersey.

Yet each and all are constant and favorite subjects of the modern painter. Why?

Fundamentally, I think, because their dress is expressive of their occupation and character, as may be said of the dress of all classes of people.

The peasantry in all European countries have preserved anywhere national and local picturesqueness and character in their dress; and too, where it still lingers unspoiled, as in France and in Hungary and Bohemia, adorned with beautiful embroidery worked by the women themselves.

The last relics of historic and traditional costume must be sought therefore among the people, and for picturesqueness we must still seek the labourer.

This seems a strange commentary upon all modern painstaking, conscious efforts to attain the natural, simple, beautiful, and suitable in dress, to be at once healthy and artistic. There really ought not to be so much difficulty about it.

If we lived simple, useful, and beautiful lives, we could not help being picturesque in the highest sense.

There is the modern difficulty.

We are driven back from every point to the ever-present social question.

TYPES OF WORKING DRESS

UTILITY
PICTURESQUENESS



Hungarian
Peasant
Costume: a
Transyl-
vanian Bride



Sketched at
Banffy
Hunyad,
Transylvania



Hungarian
Peasant
Farmer



Sketched at
Banffy
Hunyad,
Transylvani



Therefore, it seems to me that, though highly valuable and educational, we must not rely entirely upon conscious cultivation and conscious effort to lift the question of dress above vulgarity and affectation.

Modern society encourages the ideal of do-nothingness, so that it becomes an object to get rid of the outward signs of your particular occupation as soon as you cease work, if you are a worker, and to look as if you never did any if you are not.

This notion, combined perhaps with the gradual degradation of all manual labour under the modern system, has combined with business habits and English love of neatness, and perhaps prosaic and Puritan plainness, to produce the conventional costume of the modern "gentleman"—really the business man or bourgeois citizen.

The ruling type always prevails, and stamps its image and superscription upon life everywhere.

Thus the outward and visible signs of the prosperous and respectable, the powerful and important, have come to be the frock-coat and tall hat—gradually evolved from the broad-brim and square cut jerkin of the Puritan of the seventeenth century.

Even the modern gentleman, when he takes to actually doing something, or playing at something, becomes at once more or less picturesque.

The flannels of the cricketer, and the boating man, the parti-coloured jerseys of our football

teams—the modern equivalent, I suppose, of the knightly coat heraldry of the lists—all have a certain character and expressiveness. The costume of the cyclist again is another instance of adaptation to pursuit allied to picturesqueness, since it acknowledges at least the form of figure, and especially the legs, lost in ordinary civilian costume. In the various forms of riding-dress, again, we get a certain freedom and variety in costume through adaptation, both in men and women's dress.

What modern costume really lacks is not so much character and picturesqueness, as beauty and romance—a general indictment which might be brought against modern life. We are really ruled by the dead weight of the prosaic, the prudent, the timid, the respectable, over and above the specializing adaptive necessities of utility before mentioned.

When we turn from the prosaic picturesqueness of such specialized dresses to the region of pure ornament, as in the modern full or evening dress of men and women, what do we find?

As far as men are concerned pure convention, the severest simplicity, without beauty, and almost without ornament, and, except in the case of those entitled to wear orders, confined to studs, watch-chain, etc. The clothes, the negation of colour—black, enlivened only by white linen and white waistcoat, and patent leather.

I have here drawn a contrast between a gentleman's dress of the present time and one of the fourteenth century.

Both are extremely simple in design; but the mediaeval one alone can claim beauty of design, as it is true to the lines of the figure, and does not cut it up by sharp divisions and contrasts.

In the repression of ornament we may detect another influence, that of monarchical and aristocratic institutions. Since if ornaments were freely worn by ordinary citizens, what would become of the doubtful distinction of ribbons and stars. The ordinary citizen, in the exercise of his individual taste, might have finer jewellery and better design upon him than the cardinal and the diplomatist. That would never do, course.

The same rock ahead will be found, I mean, in the case of trousers.

Knee breeches, silk stockings, and buckled shoes are obviously more elegant and becoming than tubes of black cloth; but if the ordinary citizen takes to them what becomes of the official dignity of the golden footman, or of the cabinet minister at court, my Lord Mayor, Mr. Speaker, and other notabilities?

Men's dress having been reduced to the extreme of plainness in ordinary life, any relics of antiquity are used to denote official position, and the very plainness of evening dress is made use of to set off the decorations of courtly persons.

These are a few of the complexities which attend any serious attempt to reform men's dress. They serve to convince one that costume is really controlled by the forms of social life, condition, occupation, rank, general tradition,

A CONTRAST
MODERN & MEDIEVAL SIMPLICITY

19th
CENTURY



14th
CENTURY



Of the
Progress of
Taste in
Dress in
Relation to
Art Educa-
tion

sentiment, and sense of fitness, so that we can only reasonably expect great changes in the outside of life when corresponding changes are affecting the inside—the economic foundation, and moral tone of society.

But let us look at the ladies.

Here at all events appears to be a field for the cultivation and display of taste and beauty for the sake of beauty and taste alone. More convenience and utility in a lady's evening dress does not appear to be consulted at all. It often loses much of its primal covering capacity, and takes the form of a floral dressing to set off the head and bust and arms of the fair wearer. Most delicate materials and colours are used—white samite, mystic, wonderful; trailing clouds of glory in tulle and gauze; Eastern embroidery, and Chinese and Indian silks, gold, coral, pearl, diamonds and precious stones, and flowers both real and (alas!) artificial, are some of the materials which contribute to the modern lady's evening toilette.

In the choice and use of these beautiful materials there is evidently abundant room for the exercise of the nicest judgement and the most refined and delicate individual taste. There can be no doubt, too, that these qualities are often met with, and that they are invariably found with a love and considerable knowledge of art. I do not say that a knowledge of art alone will enable people to dress tastefully. That is not always the case. The power of expression of taste or individuality in dress is no doubt like other gifts of expression, innate.

But a study of art, the training of the eye to appreciate the delicacies of beautiful line and quality of colour, and beauty of design in pattern, even without much executive power, must act upon the selective capacity generally. I think there is no doubt that we do see the signs of artistic culture, over and above natural distinction of choice, more frequently in the dress of refined and cultured women in our days than at any former period, perhaps, since the first half of the sixteenth century. There is more variety, more individuality, signs of that increasing independence of thought and action which distinguish our countrywomen.

The immense range of choice, both in simple and costly materials in women's dress, may be put down to increased commercial activity and the modern command of the markets of the world, no doubt. The taste and discrimination which selects and combines them in an artistic dress, is, to begin with, instinctive, but is largely aided and guided by conscious cultivation and the study of art and the works of artists, I think.

We may, indeed, detect certain distinct influences in certain leading types of women's dress, even in that comparatively narrow region left to individual choice by the dictates of fashion or the milliner, dressmaker, and draper, and comparatively few feel themselves at liberty to move much beyond this.

If then our dictators, for the mass, must at present be sought principally in these professional or trade directions we are thrown back

again upon the quality and effectiveness of artistic and technical education.

The great municipalities are busy spending large sums upon technical institutes, where the artistic lamb is expected to lie down with the manufacturing and commercial lion, where science and art are to become inseparable, if not undistinguishable, and inventive design is expected to keep pace with the labour or wage-saving ingenuities, and mechanical economics forced upon the manufacturer by competition. Among other things millinery and dressmaking will be taught, so that one may suppose the technical school will have a direct bearing upon taste in dress.

The same difficulty arises here as in the case of art-school teaching. You may lead a horse to the water but you cannot make him drink. Rather, perhaps, we are providing patent buckets before securing a water supply. What I mean is that, ultimately, in all the arts, in all matters of taste and beauty we must go back to life and nature. Beauty is inseparably associated with love, and cannot be produced without it: and unless the conditions of ordinary life admit of beauty we must not expect the reproduction of beautiful things. We cannot expect that science, or mechanical principles, or commercial demand will enable us to produce it in any direction to order. We cannot expect to get beauty at any price, if while arranging an elaborate system of art education on the one hand we allow ourselves to destroy its sources in nature, in the beauty of our own land, by

ruthless destruction or vulgarization now too common. Beauty and taste can only spring out of the conditions or the materials which go to the making of a harmonious life. They must have opportunities of germinating and growing up in minds with leisure to think, with capacity to feel, with freedom and opportunity to select, with materials and margin for experiment, and above all with a centralizing social ideal—a keynote of love hope or faith.

Let us ask ourselves how far we are, individually or collectively, from the attainment of such conditions.

OF TEMPORARY STREET-DECORATIONS

Of Tempor-
ary Street-
Decorations

THE decoration of streets at times of public rejoicing seems to afford abundant opportunities for the exercise of artistic taste and fancy, and since in our time such occasions are apparently on the increase, it might be worth while for artists to give more serious attention to design of this kind. It cannot be said that hitherto public efforts at street decoration in this country have been very distinguished. English individualistic habits, and English commercial instincts are both unfavourable to artistic success in this direction; we are not good at collective expression in any art, and the new imperialism has not so far helped us to be articulate in street decoration. The adornment of our streets and public places usually falls into the hands of trade contractors, and anything like freshness of idea, taste, or pleasing fancy is distinguished rather by its absence. Our fiery patriotism seems quite content to let our decorative crowns and gilded emblems and wreaths be "made in Germany," and the popular imagination is sufficiently lifted by union jacks,

supplied in "all sizes" down to the pocket-hand-kerchief by the dauntless commercial instinct aforesaid.

Nothing, of course, gives colour and movement so readily as bunting, and the very sight of a flag is exciting. But flags are dangerous things, and private zeal in the display of flags often outruns heraldic discretion. One sees strange treatment of the national emblem sometimes. A people so fond of waving them ought to know its own flags and how to hoist them one would think. I noted the other day a remarkable treatment of the red ensign, the usual arrangement of the union jack in dexter quarter being varied by cutting it into quarters and placing one quarter in the usual place and the other at the extreme lower corner of the fourth quarter of the red field, dropping the other two out altogether. This may have been from motives of economy. I have seen, too, the white ensign hoisted upside down! The old way of hanging gay rugs and tapestries from the window-sills would produce a very picturesque effect in a street, and would at all events avoid such a "nice derangement of epitaphs" as those above mentioned.

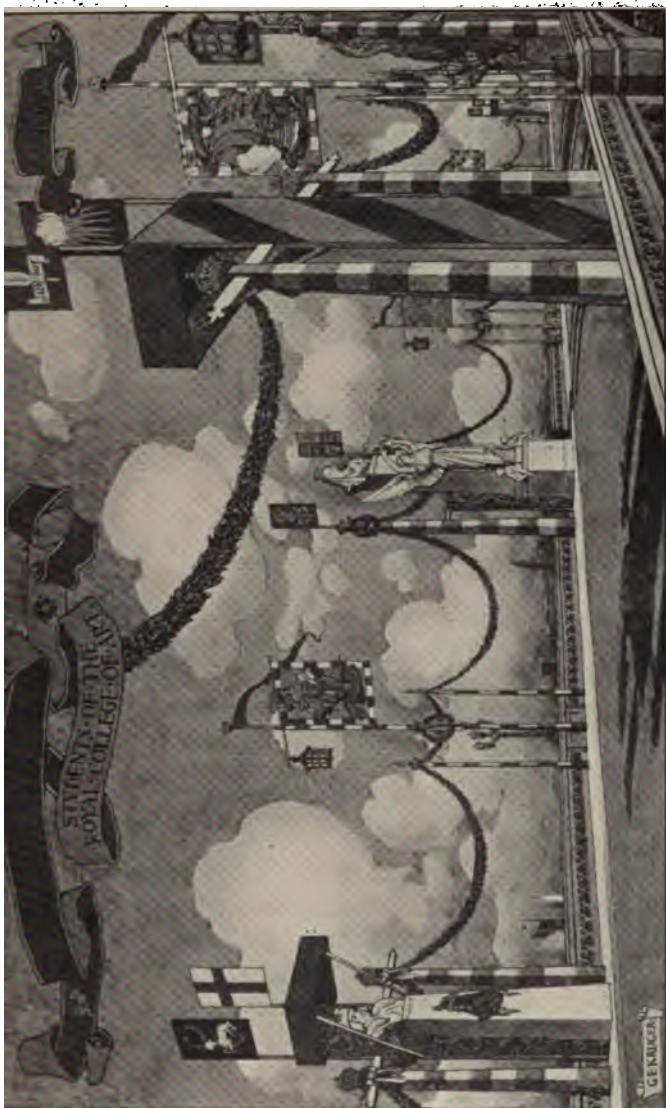
Some streets lend themselves to decorative effects better, of course, than others, and narrow streets are easier to decorate than wide ones.

Scale in regard to the buildings and the position of the decorations are of the greatest importance. In our London streets very frequently the houses differ in height and width of frontage as much as they differ in architectural taste and

period, and this increases the distinctive decoration.

A Venetian mast may be in decorative relation to the height of buildings at the street, or even on one side of the street, quite ridiculous in regard to other buildings on the same or other side of the same street. The street decorator clings to the Mast as a chief means of street decoration, only a spar, with the tenacity of a drowning sailor. The result, too, in such a case, often is a wreck. Those poles recently in Piccadilly—one of the prettiest ornate streets opposite the Park (perhaps because left out!)—look too small, and are garlanded, while the shields—bearing the cullis and the rose alternately—are undersized, and not of a fine shape. The only thing is the connecting garland which, but these ought to be thicker in diameter. Then again, the poles face only one way towards to the road, so that they do not give perspective. Something on the principle of a cross-tree or yard-arm and hanging yards is effective. At least in *one* piece of art, the attempt attempted for the coronation scheme of decoration for Westminster by the Royal College of Art under the direction of Prof. Lanteri and Prof. Moira—this was adopted. Boldly designed banners by the students hung from cross-trees over the pavement, balanced by lanterns at the sides, while between them busts of heroic statesmen, kings and queens under canopies, and

Decoration
of West-
minster
Bridge. By
the Students
of the Royal
College of
Art



From a
Coloured
Drawing by
G. E. Kruger

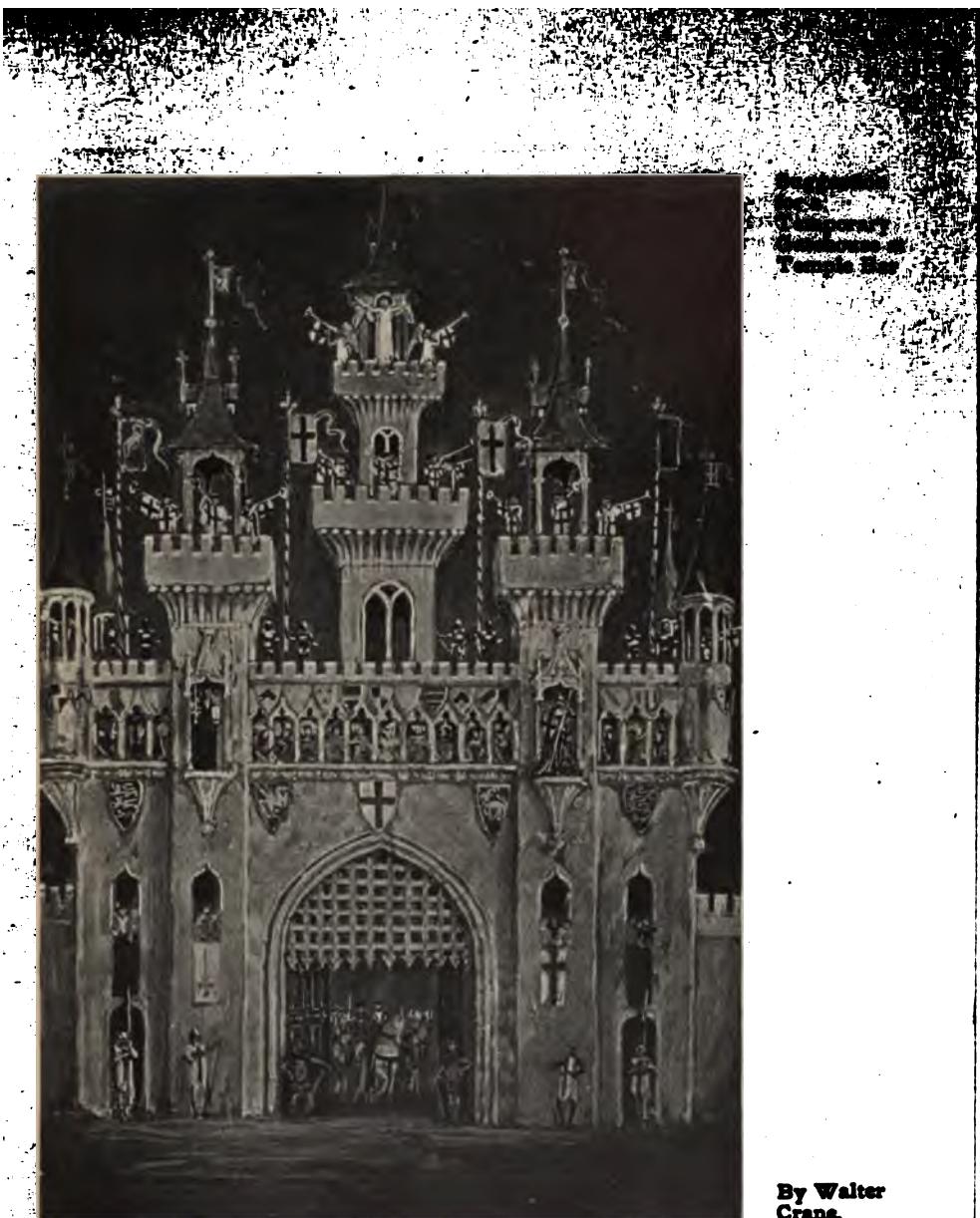
of Tempor-
ary Street
Decorations

by stencilled hangings fastened to trees, groups being connected with ropes, and the banners by hanging them from trees.

The tapering rectangular columns of art mode with the flat trencher columns come in quite usefully as a support for Venetian masts in places, and they may be used for plants in pots, vases, or trophies on them, or other emblematic beasts, or electric lamps. A colonnade of such columns, connected by entablature bearing suitable inscriptions, hanging garlands, or bay trees in festoons, would be a pretty scheme for a street not very wide street.

One generally feels the want of a connecting link across the roadway, over which a parallel scheme of street decorations of flags is the simplest way of doing it. This has been done often enough, but if the streets are really narrow a succession of cloths hung horizontally across the street, in the kind of irregular valarium, would have an effect—say alternating in two or three colours with bold heraldic devices, either appropriate to the locality, upon the town crest. Streets hung in this way in red and white, green and white, or blue and white, would have a pleasant effect. Striped cloths could also be used in this way.

One consistent colour scheme, say the colours of the township (with Chinese lanterns strung across for night effect) for each section of the town, with an arch or gateway.



By Walter
Crane.

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197 M

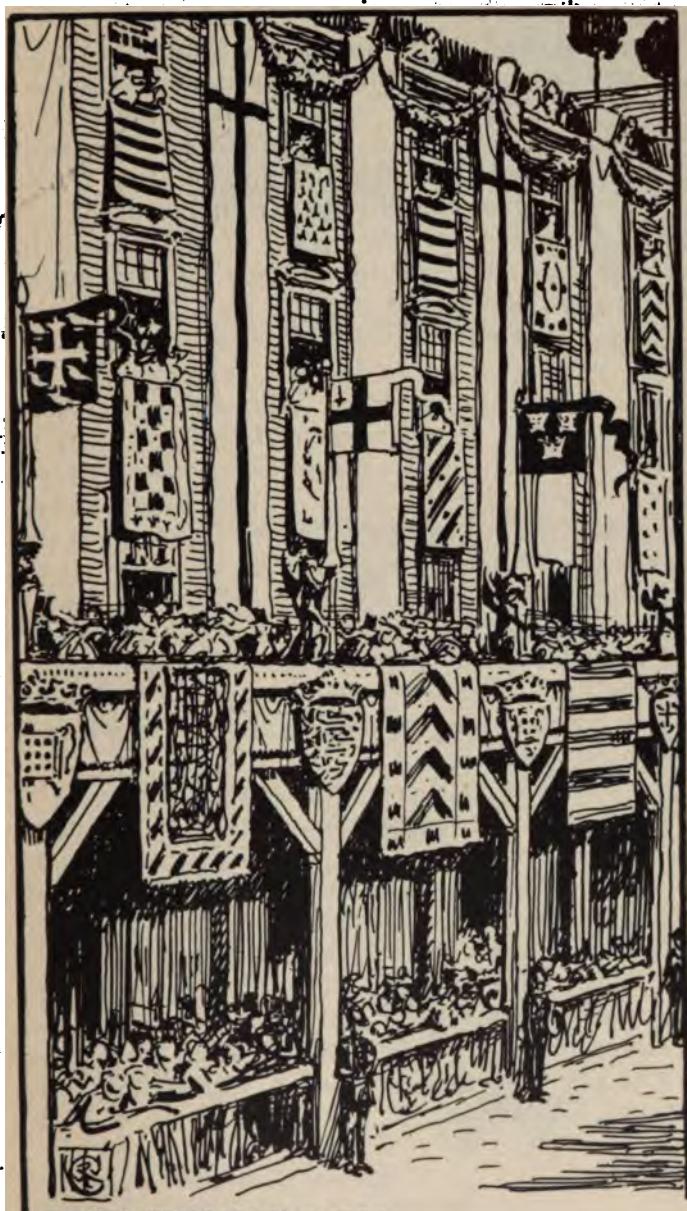
mark the entrance to each ward or district, would be a means of obtaining unity, as well as striking and harmonious decorative effect.

Something of this kind was in the mind of a deputation which waited on the Lord Mayor at the time of the coronation to offer a suggestion to the City, which would have lent itself well to such a treatment.

Starting from Temple Bar, the existing Griffin—or City dragon (which we whispered might be temporarily removed!)—might have made way for a fanciful Gothic gatehouse with gilded portcullis and gates, built of timber and plaster of course, but substantial enough to support warders and trumpeters, and a gallery of fair ladies who might shower roses or gilded oak leaves upon the King when he passed, as our Richard II was greeted at his coronation from the tower in Cheapside, which bore a golden angel upon its top. St. Paul and St. George should occupy niches on such a gateway, which should also display the banners and badges of the City and the Temple, and the arms of the City guilds, while Gog and Magog personified should stand at the gates.

Fleet Street should be arcaded by a series of simple timber supports upholding a balcony, or tier of seats, at the height of the first-floor windows. The timbers might be whitewashed and decorated with chevrons or other simple patterns in black or red, but the construction not concealed. And at regular intervals, upon piers, a bold heraldic beast (say the dragon of St. George) might support the City banner; Pega-

Temporary
Street
Decoration



TEMPORARY STREET DECORATION.
ROUGH SKETCH TO SHOW ARCADED STREET.
SEE DR. HANGING DRAPERY & HERALDRY.

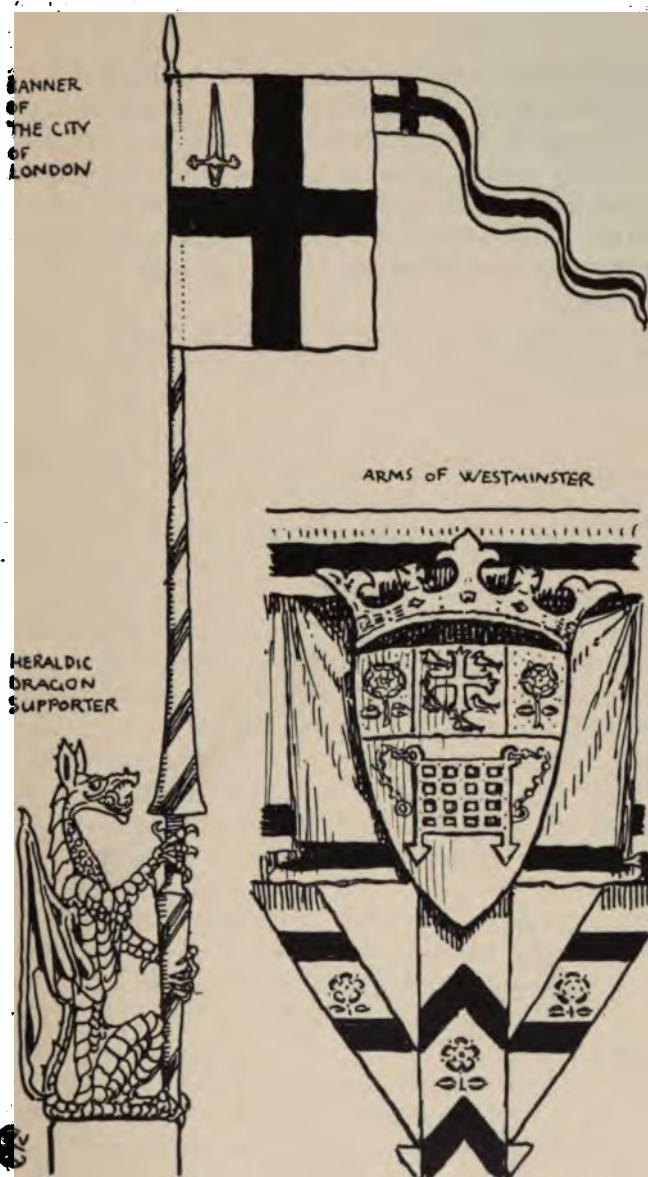
sus and the Lamb those of the Innholders; the Temple to mark their boundaries with the Red Cross and the White Rose. At Clifford's Inn the Workers' Guild could hang out their badge, which they liked them; while St. Dunstan, and the two Inns of Court and Blackfriars might appear further on.

I would drape the fronts of the houses in white and red, the St. George's Cross being to run from end to end of Fleet Street, and along the parapets of the houses there should be a border or cresting of green boughs connected across the street at intervals by light, arching trellises surmounted by crowns, to be illuminated at night, and covered with green leaves and hung with the shields and badges beforenamed (which in the able hands of Mr. Barron, of the Society of Antiquaries, would not be the tame things to which we are too much accustomed).

Such a scheme could be a type for each ward, or, on the other hand, each ward could be different in scheme as well as colour, but each should have its gatehouse and its guild represented thereat.

Well, the City considered itself sufficient in itself—is it not always self-sufficient? The Mayor preferred to rely, possibly, upon the inglorious Alma-Tademas and St. John and Barrons concealed in the Guildhall Library—or shall we say, the contractors of Houndsditch? I fancy there was a suspicion that we were early birds trying to get the contract, and that Lord Windsor (who headed the deputation) was perhaps the head of a decorating company, limited!

Temporary
Street
Decoration



TEMPORARY STREET DECORATION
DETAILS IN PREVIOUS SKETCH IN ELEVATION.
REDUCED TO SCALE $\frac{1}{2}$ " TO 1 FOOT.

It is said the world knows nothing greater than the greatest men—perchance, also, it never saw the best street decorations. But how can one reasonably expect London to glow with enthusiasm over grand schemes of street decoration which principally consist of shining decorative lights carefully concealed under municipal or other bushels?

OF THE TREATMENT OF ANIMAL FORMS IN DECORATION AND HER- ALDRY

THE forms of animals furnish the designer in all kinds of decorative work, whether flat or in relief, with pleasant means of enriching and enlivening his pattern.

Ornament may indeed reach great refinement and delicacy without the use of living forms, as it has done in the case of Arabian and Moorish types, and in such Persian work under Mohammedan influence as the superb carpet from the Mosque of Ardebil; yet a lover of incident and romance, of movement and variety—perhaps one might say a western imagination—welcomes the forms of animals, birds, and even humans, as delightful elements of pattern.

Originally, no doubt, like the recurring types of floral form in Oriental, Chinese and Indian and Persian work, animal forms were introduced with definite meaning, with symbolical and heraldic purpose, and (despite Mr. Lewis Day) I still think that ornament gains in dignity and character if it contains some kernel of thought or intention or poetic fancy in its meshes, in its

Of the
Treatment
of Animal
Forms in
Decoration
and Heraldry

lines and curves, and the forms which the inventor plays.

Technically, by the use of animal contrasting masses can be obtained in kind not possible in any other way. stems and leaves and flowers in a pleasantly broken by the varied shapes and animals which give relief and their larger contours and masses of this power of contrast and mass are of great value. Even in a mechanically surface pattern, woven or printed, dignity, and distinction can be given to ring elements of this kind, especially if careful about their choice and, above all, treatment.

The treatment of animal forms in decorative art, of course depends greatly upon the conditions of the work, the material of its execution, its use and position. The rich colour and texture of Arras tapestry, for instance, it is true, would lend themselves to a much greater degree of realism than the more abstract treatment suitable to the limitations of inlaid wood or cloisonné enamel. In embroidery, again, the needle has considerable freedom as regards texture and the expression of surface, and in the case of the plumage of birds, may, as we see done in Chinese and Japanese silk embroidery, approach nature in the construction and arrangement of the feathers, and the sheen and gloss of the colour effect.

Even in the extremely abstract treatment necessitated by the exigencies of incised hiero-



Royal
Mantle from
the Treasury
of Bamberg,
Twelfth
Century
(from De
Pury)

Heraldic
Treatment of
Animal
Forms in
Textiles

Chasuble
from the
Cathedral of
Anagni,
Thirteenth
Century
(from De
Farcy)



Treatment of
Animal
Forms in
Textiles



Sicilian Silk
Pattern.
Fourteenth
Century
(Fleischbach)

Treatment of
Animal
Forms in
Textiles



Sicilian Silk
Pattern.
Fourteenth
Century
(Fischbach)

Traditions of
Animal
Forms in
Textiles



Sicilian Silk
Pattern.
Fourteenth
Century
(Fischbach)

Treatment of
Animal
Forms in
Textiles



Sicilian Silk
Pattern.
Fourteenth
Century
(Fischbach)

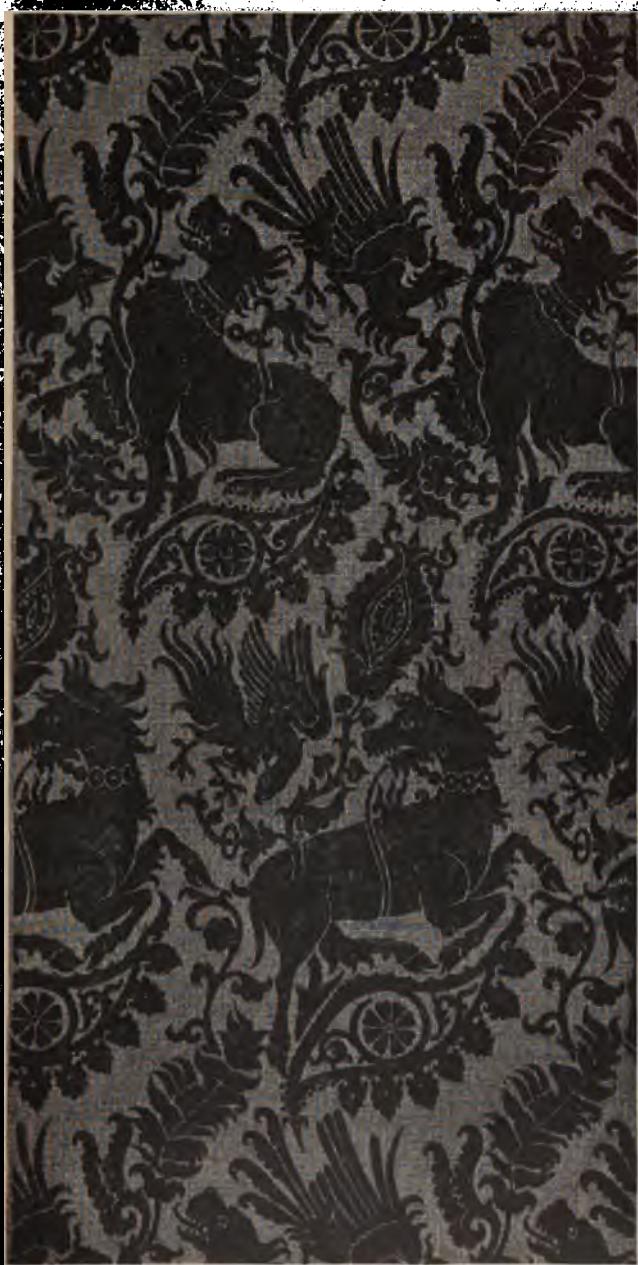


Sicilian Silk
Pattern.
Fourteenth
Century
(Plachbach)

Treatment of
Animal
Forms in
Textiles



Sicilian Silk
Pattern.
Fourteenth
Century. . .
(Fischbisch);



Sicilian Silk
Pattern.
Fourteenth
Century
(Fischbach)

Treatment of
Animal
Forms in
Textiles

Sicilian Silk
Pattern.
Fourteenth
Century
(Fischbach)



wherein we can hardly find finer examples of
boldness, so direct and unerring is the charac-
terization, than the birds and animals of the
Egyptians. The same power of charac-
terization, though with a freer hand, is also seen
in the painted paintings.

Many Greek potters ran them close in the black silhouettes of animals form-



**Embroidered
Tabard,
Sixteenth
Century,
in the
Archaeo-
logical
Museum at
Ghent (from
De Farcy)**

fers around their vessels and vases; but here at work a conscious ornamental treatment of the treatment of their forms—an apparently intentional arrangement of the lines of the animal into more or less formal curves. A running antelope, for instance, will take a sort of serpentine curve, and in one case the volute itself is drawn beneath. The forms of these animals and birds of the vase paintings were no doubt influenced by the brush, and many of

Of the
Treatment
of Animal
Forms in
Decoration
and Heraldry

Detail from
Embroidered
Tabard,
Sixteenth
Century

them might be described as broad
bodies of the birds and fish are
masses, and in their repetition,



such ornamental generalization, a certain
and rhythm is obtained.

Indeed, there is no better method of
ing ornamental effect when introducing ani-
forms than the practice of designing them within
certain definite boundaries, which may be gen-

**Of the
Treatment
of Animal
Forms in
Decoration
and Heraldry**

**Detail from
Heraldic
Tabard,
Sixteenth
Century**



books some clear adaptations of birds and animals enclosed in circles, and they are very ingenious pieces of packing.

The early weavers of the Egypto-Roman textiles of Alexandria and of Byzantium, and

Of the
Treatment
of Animal
Forms in
Decoration
and Heraldry

Detail from
Embroidered
Tabard,
Sixteenth
Century

of the renowned Sicilian silks from the twelfth century down to the fourteenth centuries, and those of the Florentines of the fourteenth, all revelled in animal forms, and were adepts in their treatment. In England



latter cases they were used symbolically and heraldically, and, indeed, with the development of heraldry in the middle ages under feudalism, such elements became the principal elements in decoration of all kinds, so much so that it might

be almost said that heraldry was *the* ornament and decoration of the mediaeval times.

Our Richard II, it will be remembered, in

“FAMOUS FIGURES IN DECORATION
CONTINUING THE RACE OF”

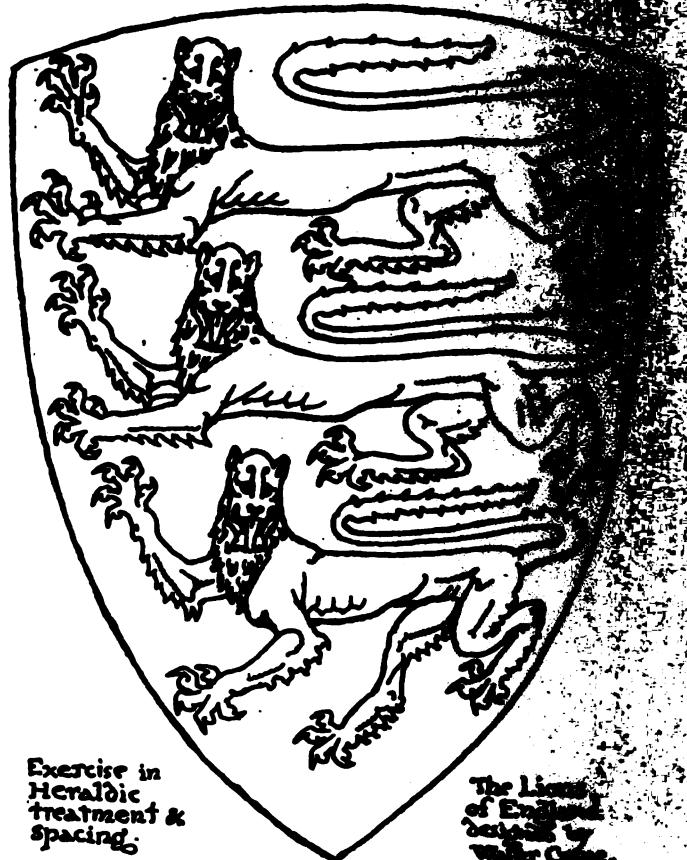
RICHARD IInd,
From the picture
at Wilton House



the famous Wilson picture, is kneeling in a robe of gold tissue woven with the badges of his house—the hart couchant and the phoenix—repeated all over as in a sort of diaper, and there are abundant instances among our brasses,

Of the
Treatment
of Animal
Forms in
Decoration
and Heraldry

stall plates, and effigies, of the splendid development of heraldry in the annals, as well as



Exercise in
Heraldic
treatment &
spacing.

The Lions
of England
designed by
Walter Crane.

dresses of knights and ladies bearing their family totems thick upon them.

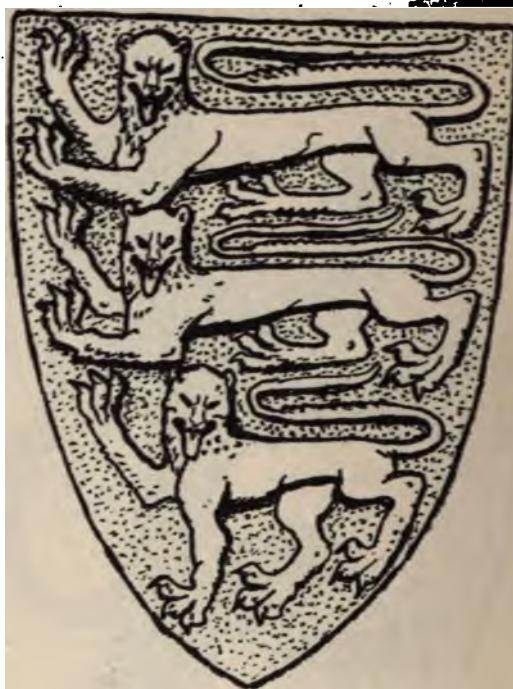
Boldness, spirit, distinctness of colour and form, and characterization governed by order.

mental colour and effect, seem to be the chief principles in designing heraldic animals.



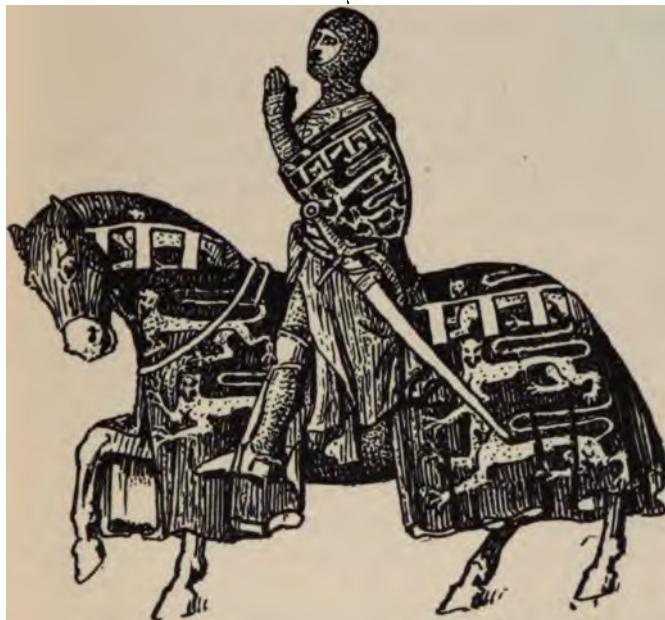
They not only have to be depicted, but *displayed*. Therefore every distinctive and important attribute or characteristic is emphasized.

The lion's mane and tail become foliated,



The Lions
(or Leopards)
of England,
from the Tomb
of William de
Valence, Earl
of Pembroke,
Westminster
Abbey. 1296.

and his legs are fringed and tasselled. His claws are spread wide—cleared for action; his mouth is well open, and his long red, curly



From the Tomb of
Edmund Crouchback,
Earl of Lancaster. 1296.
Westminster Abbey.

tongue rollicks out between his emphatic teeth. A lion out of a cage in the Zoological Gardens would be no manner of use on a coat, or as a crest or a supporter. The endeavour of later times to make the heraldic lion a more reason-

able being has only tamed and degraded him.
He looks round-headed, muzzy, and squat.

Much the same principles apply to the treatment of the other "fearful wild fowl" of heraldry, as well as the necessity for very careful decorative spacing. I will only recall, in this connection, the spacing of the English leopards in the fourth quarter of the royal arms on a shield of thirteenth century shape as offering good field to a designer from the executive of ingenuity in space filling.

OF THE DESIGNING OF BOOK-COVERS

THE book-cover, as a field for surface design, appears at first sight to offer in its many varieties a less restricted field for invention than perhaps any portable object of common use which demands the attention of a décorator.

Yet in no field of design are certain qualities more essential to success—qualities, too, outside the particular conditions of the various methods, and processes used in the production of book-covers.

These are, in chief, tastefulness and sense of scale and proportion, important enough it will be said in all design, but narrowed down to the limited field of the book-cover, and in full view of its object and purpose, they become all-important.

Limited, for instance, to the narrowest demands of utility—an inscription or title on side or back needful to distinguish the outside of one book from another, questions of choice of scale, of lettering in relation to the size and proportion of the cover, of the choice of the

of the
Designing of
Book-covers

form of the lettering and the letters upon the cover in

Now the side of a book is a flat surface within rectangular limits in size according to the form of the paper which determines the size to be covered—folio, quarto, &c.

The book itself is a rectangular block which lies on the table. It is a case, or at best, at its worst it contains nothing but remains of some kind.

The rectangularity, however, influences the designer, from the simple block or tablet of lettering, to the arabesque of the most elaborate.

The best cover designs are those in which the feeling of the enclosure is expressed or suggested in this way, but of course it may be expressed in a variety of ways.

In the old stamped leather and vellumings of the early days of printing, from Venice and Basle, for instance, a very satisfactory plan was to have two or three borders, one within the other, enclosing the back of the book, enclosing a central panel, except for the title, stamped or painted. In the upper part of this plain panel, the designs were formed of stamps of different heraldic devices, scroll-work, embossed in straight lines. These designs were models of scale in book ornamentation, carefully spaced and composed of



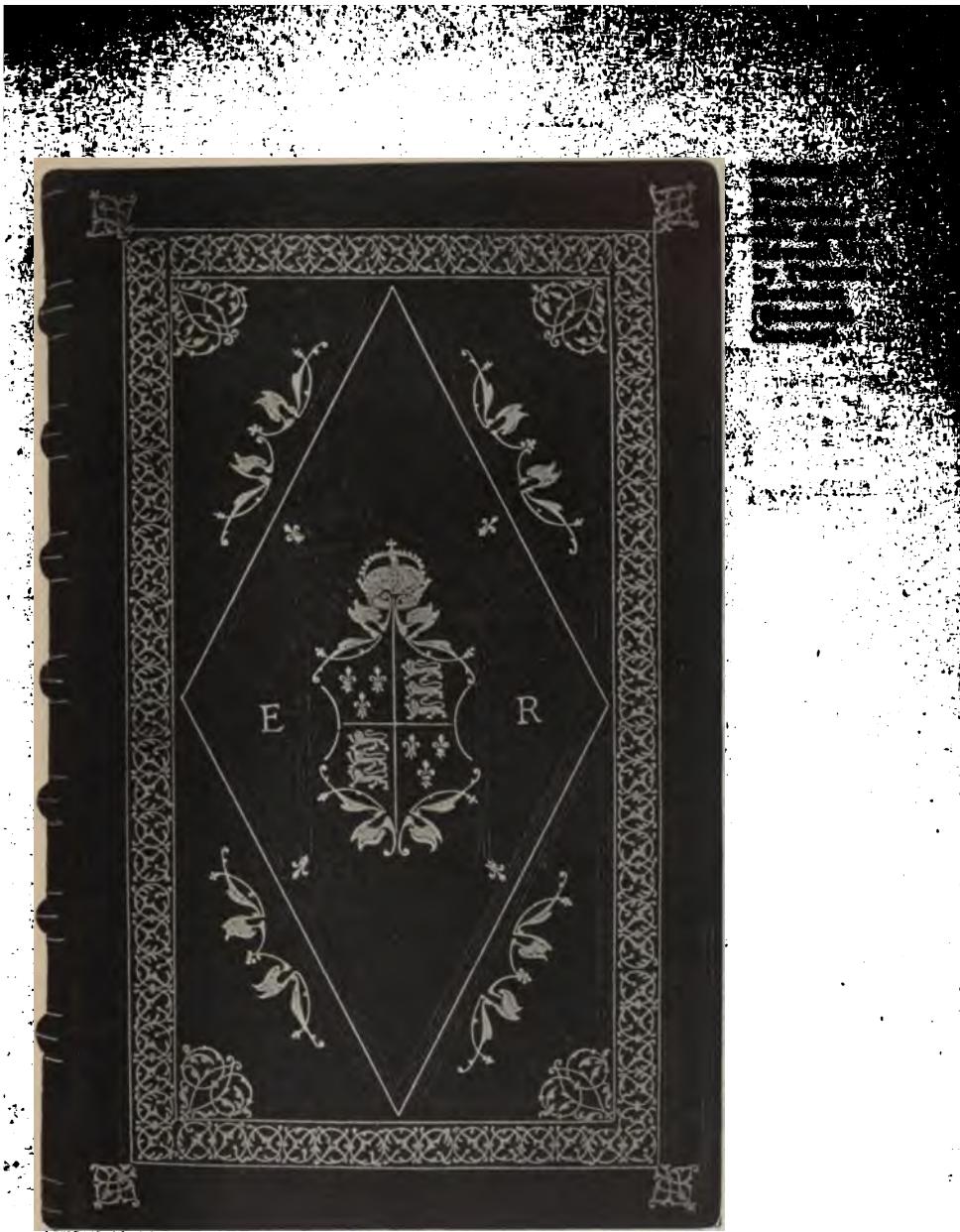
elements, have a delicate and rich effect.

I need not dwell upon the gold and silver mounted manuscript cases of Byzantine times, which were the work of other craftsmen, since I prefer to speak rather with the design of the book-cover as a matter of mass and line adapted to the conditions of the book-cover.

The method of stamping designs on the owner boldly upon the cover, in gold upon leather covers from the sixteenth century and onwards, has a rich effect, and these stamps, whether abstract ornamental elements or more useful examples of rich and effective designs, within narrow limits, the enclosing shape indicated only by the edges of the stamp, which fits into its invisible shape without effort and without any marking.

The designers of the stamps in gold must have been in close touch with the designer of printers' ornaments—headings, borders, and the like—in book-cases identical with them, and to these we owe that sense of scale and proportion in the ornamentation of the earlier books.

In gold-tooled designs the necessary forms having to be composed or built up of restricted elements, or separate motifs, the ingenious combination of which produces the delicate arabesques of line and leaf and scroll forms we admire as the crown and glory of book-decoration.



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U. S. P.

binder's craft, has also come into preservation of scale, since the book may necessarily be limited in size.

Before the recent revival of book-decoration, which so much is due to the influence of Mr. Cobden-Sanderson, there was a tendency towards over-small, frittered detail in gold tooling, and business-like mechanical repeats of stock patterns.

Yet repetition of forms or motifs can be tastefully as well as in a common way.

Few methods in tooling are more appropriate and satisfactory than the diaper, which is sometimes used on the back cover, and sometimes covers the sides only.

The decoration of the back of a book requires particular care. In paper-wrappers the ornament may effectively be concentrated upon the back, which may include the title, leaving the sides free.

When the sides are decorated, they may be the link to connect the obverse with the reverse—unless we like to have the side and back side.

But I am trespassing upon the province of the publisher. The cloth cover seems to me to be the place to compromise, though often agreeably. Our continental neighbours issue their books in limp paper wrappers, expecting them to be bound as a matter of course. This may be due to the high state of the binder's craft in France. Here, our publishers vie with one another in issuing their books in attractive



Wynkyn de Worlde,
and the Arms
of France
and England,
with Tudor
Rose, etc.
(Sixteenth
Century).

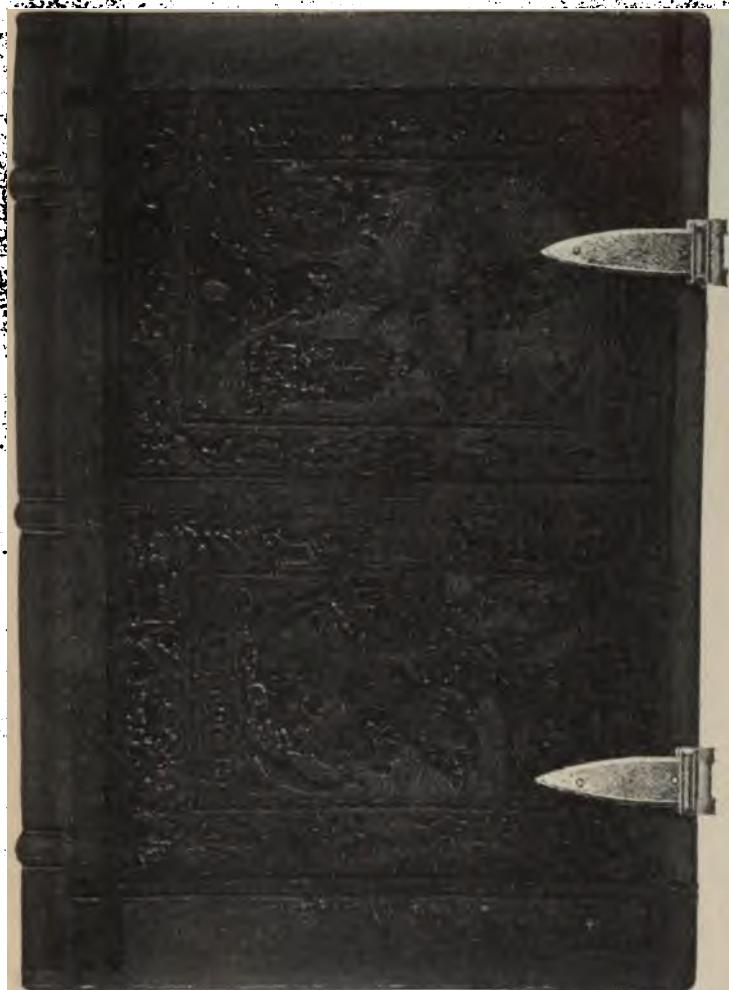
gilt covers which at one time rival the gold-tooled binding; we have seen every kind of execution, both in design and execution, black and white, and varnished, used in cloth printed effects, often going far in the picture. We may see the influence of the past more so when we come to a cover which imposes still less upon the designer, in fact, none at all, save the space—unless his sense of taste impose upon himself; yet cloth designs have shown more licence than any other cover of late.

The cover printed in few colours and varnished for protection had for a considerable vogue for Christmas books, a lighter sort and for those principally for children. These were, when first introduced, rather shocking to the booksellers, who went by weight and the amount of cloth cover, in appraising literary worth in the market.

When a certain thin square volume, which I was responsible for, was modestly put up to the usual test being applied, the reply "This will never do!"—the publisher was of a different opinion.

It may be said for the cover in few colours, when it encloses a book of few colours, that it has a certain fitness, and the rest must depend largely upon the design.

The illustrated magazine cover has exercised



Book of Common
St. George
and the
Dragon, by
John Rymer
(Sixteenth
Century)

a good deal of artistic skill is required, and it presents the problem of the designer in making as an essential part of his design something which always should be. There is a certain native about the angular and bold letters used in contrast with the softness of the human figure and drapery, or the heraldry, and in a cover from a line block the designer loses his feeling for these contrasting elements.

Here again the influences of the world outside come in, the conditions of the struggle for existence being similar to the struggle for existence upon the hoarding among its more popular cousins. In the covers of the popular illustrated weekly journal, and in the book-decoration, largely intended in the first place to attract attention, with a view of sale,

Like all competitive processes, there is a commercial object, while certain qualities of force or eccentricity may generally lead to deterioration on the one side. The final test of all designs in the art of book-decoration—the appearance of book-covers—the appearance of companions and friendly counsellors, wrapped up in the question: "Can you do it with it?"

One may admire the skill and dexterity of the juggler and conjurer, but it would be difficult to sit frequently at table with a master of the craft who was given to whisking up the dinner napkin, swallowing the knives and forks,



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UoRM

discover the roast mutton in his pocket.

So a sensational book-cover may be by its audacity, but it is apt to horribly upon the drawing-room table, can hardly be expected to re-furnish suit its complexion.

A painter I know tells me that there are three classes of pictures—"pictures to live in," "pictures to live by."

Books or book covers might be put into the first class, books to be taken care of and books to be shown off.

The aristocracy, in their morocco and velvet coats, seem too costly and precious to be handled every day and be dimmed by London light and dust. Few could duplicate them, and so few books, so in the end the quiet cloth book, with its plain lettering is welcome for wear and tear. While, do as we may, the motley crowd of "yellow and black and pale and hectic red," drags their leaves before the breath of passing hands, some, perhaps, at last finding rest, and a safe reception, in the portfolios of the careful collector.

ON THE USE OF GILDING IN DECORATION

THE use of gilding in decoration of all kinds seems to be as fascinating to the artist as the pursuit in the solid form appears to be to a large proportion of the human race. In both instances, too, there are risks to be run; in particular there is use or abuse of the material involved.

The uses of gilding in art are manifold. We may regard it as the most precious and beautiful means of *emphasis in design*. A method of heightening certain important parts, such as the initial letters of an illuminated manuscript, where, by raising the letter in gesso, or gold size and burnishing, an additional richness and lustre is obtained, especially with the use of full colours, such as ultramarine, the deep blue and vermillion which warm the heart in looking at the manuscripts of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The jewel-like sparkle, too, of the burnished gold used for raised leaves and fruits here and there among the delicate arabesque page-borders as in French manuscripts of the early fourteenth century has a most charming effect, and contains

of the Use of
Gilding in
Decoration

*Appartamento
d'Inverno,
Sala
di S. Domenico
di
Roma, show-
ing Pinturicchio's
fresco: "The
Salutation"
and a Por-
tion of the
Decoration
of the Vault*



*From a
Photograph
by Anderson*

Apparta-
menti
Borgia,
Vatican,
Rome, show-
ing Portion
of "The
Salutation"
fresco, with
Enrichments
raised in
Gesso



From a
Photograph
by Anderson

the use of colour for the walls.

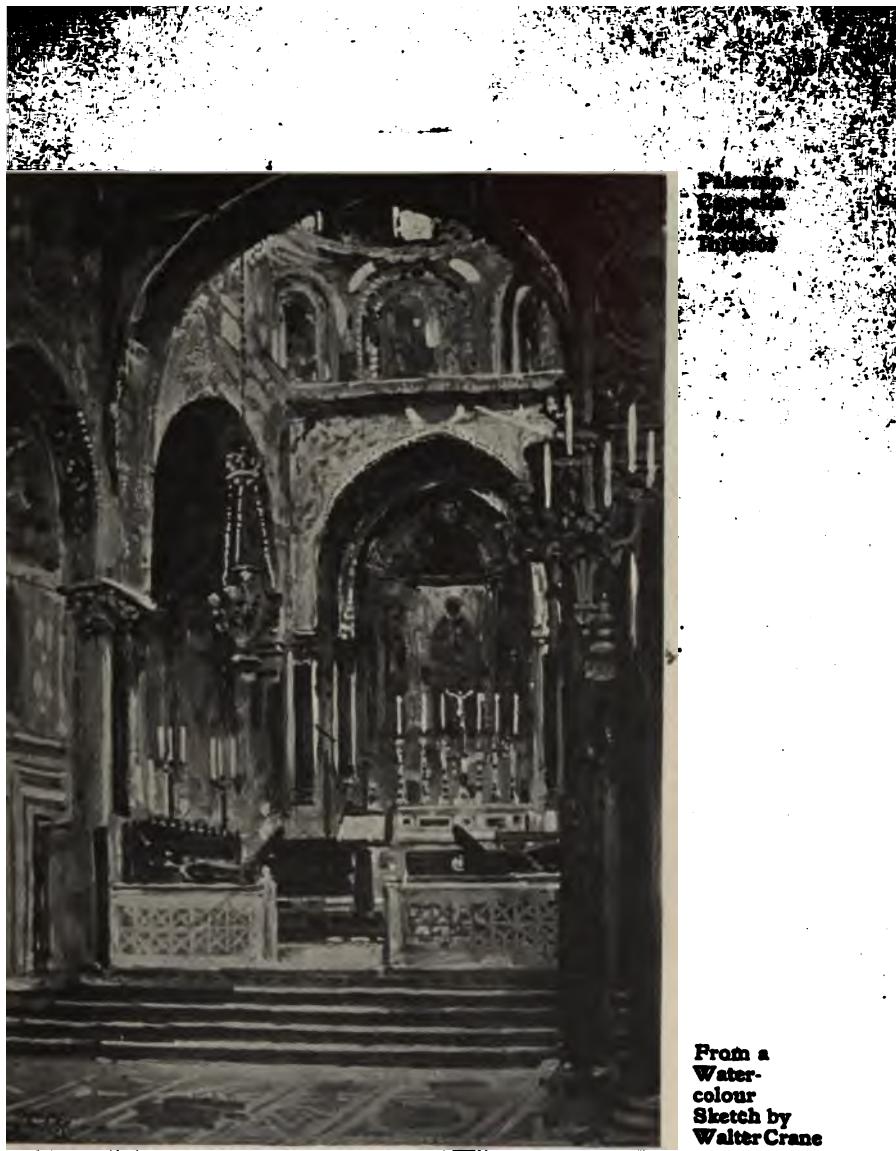
Gold, too, may be used as a background to other decorated panels, or combined with fine marbles.

Gold is a most valuable colour, uniting different colours and materials in decoration, and is often used in flat decoration, and when used with the full range of colours, rich effects are sought, it should be any single colour in decoration.

The late G. F. Watts taught blue and gold to be the typical colours of the universe.

Certainly they form one of the most-beautiful of harmonies.

In the Appartamenti Borges in Rome—a series of vaulted rooms by Pinturicchio—the prevailing colour is gold, the field of the vaults being covered with raised arabesques in gold, the ribs, while the arched spaces above the vaulting on the side walls are filled with subjects in fresco, in which the gold is echoed by certain parts such as armours and caskets being raised in gesso. The whole has a very rich and splendourous quiet effect. There is a reproduction of a portion in South Kensington Museum, also one of the room of Isabella d'Este at Mantua, which has a rich ceiling in gold colour.



From a
Water-
colour
Sketch by
Walter Crane

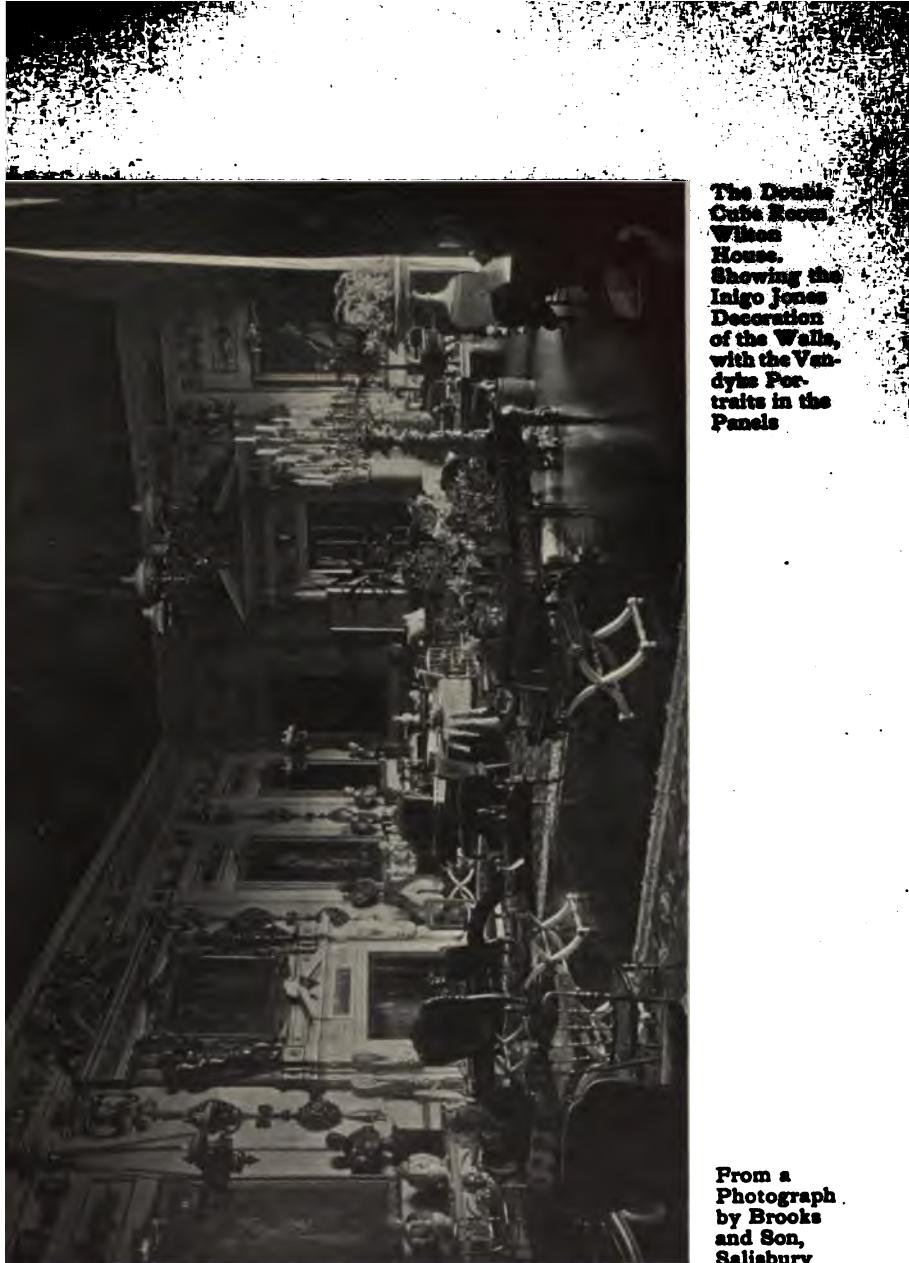
Utopia

The lining of a certain
Gate lately sold and returned
as a modern instance of bril-
liancy. It is supposed to have
reason, and both the painter
more than either bargained for
friendship, but the result was
original and beautiful. Need
was the peacock, and the arm-

"There is safety in a swall-
lowlie in "Sartor Resartus." That
in white and gold appears to be
modern decorator. I heard a
white and gold; it "always
champagne," possibly it may
balance at their bankers. There
firm of architects in New York,
Mackim, Meade and White, were
re-christened in the profession
White and Gold," owing to the
that blend in interior decora-
tion with what is called "old
tecture.

One can obtain every variety
related to gold by lacquering over
adopted this method in a room, the
ceiling with the design of a vine
frieze panelled with figure sub-
("Fables"). The light came from
window at one end of the room,
edges of the reliefs caught the light,
effect being subdued silver and
relieyed by touches of ruddy gold.
(Illustration, p. 261.)

The Double
Cubic Room,
Wilton
House,
Showing the
Inigo Jones
Decoration
of the Walls,
with the Ven-
dyke Por-
traits in the
Panels



From a
Photograph
by Brooks
and Son,
Salisbury

The use of gold as an *isolated* colour established in the form of picture frames, gilded "flat" or moulding close up from its surroundings more effectively than any other known method. In a picture frame, as I think I have before mentioned, it is a relic of the architectural relation of the picture to the wall, where it originally hung, as may be seen, for instance, in the drawing room at Wilton House.

Gold also forms a most valuable ground for colours, as in decorative painting and mosaic work, or may be used with charming effect as a *colorant*. The painters used it, for rich brocades, for stuffs, rays of light, the emblematic devices, inscriptions, and small scenes of all kinds.

Gold in Byzantine art always has been used with a sense of due solemnity. The gold tesserae which form the field of the mosaic decoration in the dome of St. Mark's at Venice impresses one with an effect of quiet splendour. They are not gaudy or flaming. The light falls through the narrow windows of the dome, and is reflected over the concave gilded surface, reflecting upwards and forwards in every variety of way as the sunlight travels, and the great figures and emblems loom majestically and mysteriously upon the gold field.

Another splendid example, and again characteristic of the Byzantine style, showing a harmony of blue and gold, is seen in the dome of the Pantheon, Rome, an exquisite gem of architecture and mosaic decoration.

The Double
Cube Room,
Wilton
House



From a
Photograph
by Brooks
and Son,
Salisbury

U or M

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Of the Use of Gilding in Decoration at Palermo.

The opposite principle in the use of gilding is illustrated in St. Peter's at Rome, and in many renaissance interiors when the mouldings, capitals, cornices, and architectural enrichments of all kinds in relief are picked out in gold. The splendour may be there—if only in the impression of costliness—but it seems of a more obvious kind, more conscious and self-assertive, and when the principle is carried throughout, out of gilding every prominence, the effect may easily become ostentatious and vulgar.

I think it is important not to lose the sense of preciousness in the use of gilding, and not with costly marbles and beautiful materials of all kinds, one should be careful not to put them to base uses, or lose their artistic value by excess.

It is comparatively easy to offer up general opinions on the use of gold; but the real problems only begin in front of the particular object in hand, and the conditions under which the decorative artist works continually vary. One may be guided by certain principles, but much more by feeling and judgement, which go to form what is called taste. Every work must be finer in proportion to the thought and feeling put into it, but no amount of gold-leaf will cover the absence of taste and sense of proportion.

OF RAISED WORK IN GESSO

DECORATIVE design in gesso stands, it may be said, midway between painting and sculpture, partaking in its variations of the characters of each in turn—the child or younger sister of both, holding, as it were, the hands of each, playful, light-hearted, familiar, associated in its time with all kinds of domestic furniture and adornment.

With an origin perhaps as ancient as the other arts, its true home is in Italy. We find it at Pompeii, with its relatives, stucco and plaster-work, in association with architecture, which also are seen in such choice forms in the decoration of the ceilings and walls of Roman tombs, such as the famous examples of the Via Latina. We find gesso work also in direct association with painting in the devotional pictures of the early Italian schools, used for the diapered backgrounds and nimbi of saints, and raised emblems and ornaments. It reappears in our own country in the painted rood-screens of Norfolk and Suffolk. At Southwold, for instance, there is a notable screen with panels, painted with figures of the apostles,

the backgrounds consisting of diapers in raised gesso.

The revival of classical taste and knowledge of classical lore and ornamental detail at the time of the renaissance in Italy led to later and highly ornate development of gesso and examples of which we may see elaborate examples in the ceilings of the Doria palace at Genoa, for instance; and in the fine decorative scheme of Pinturicchio in the Appartamenti Borgia in the Vatican, gilded gesso is used for columns, weapons, and other details in the frescoes painted on the walls, gilded relief work and blue grounds being carried out on the vaulted ceilings above, in arabesques and medallions.

A beautiful model of part of the Appartamenti, by Signor Mariani, may be seen in the Victoria and Albert Museum, where also choice examples of gesso work may be found in picture and mirror frames, and gilded coffers or cassones. There are several of these from Florence with figures in relief on flat backgrounds, punctured or stamped with patterns on the paste, and afterwards gilded with rich ornamental effect.

Then again we find gesso used underneath the burnished gold letters and leaf work of the mediaeval illuminators.

The Italian craftsman's skill in gesso seems to survive in the Italian confectioner with his free-hand decorations squeezed out in the form of raised ornaments of plaster and sugar on birthday cakes and such like; and Italian workmen are still the masters of the craft and mystery of

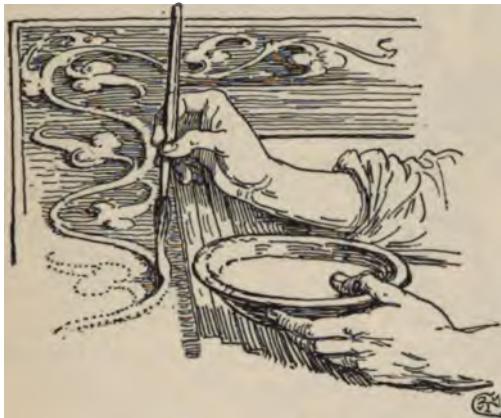
all manner of plaster-work, including moulding and casting.

of Raised Work in Gesso

Now there are various kinds of gesso and recipes for making it, and it can be worked in different ways, and on different scales, and in different degrees of relief.

For fine work on a small scale, such as might be used for caskets or small panels in cabinets,

Method of Working with the Brush in Gesso



and the decoration of furniture generally, Gesso Duro is the best.

It is a mixture of whitening soaked in cold water till quite soft, glue or gelatine, boiled linseed oil, and a little resin, mixed well together to the consistency of cream. There is also a gesso used by frame-makers composed of whitening and parchment size.

Supposing it is desired to work a design on a panel of wood, the wood had best have a coat of shellac or varnish first. Then having determined your design lay on the paste with the point of a

Piling for
Picture-
frame, in
Gesso Duro

Designed by
Walter Crane



long-pointed sable brush, the kind known as a "rigger," or small water-color brush will answer—simply dropping the gesso from the point of the brush or, better, dragging it, so that the gesso may flow from its point, as the design may require, and adding more of the paste where greater relief is required.

Gesso Duro takes some days to dry, but dries, as its name implies, very hard. It can then be scraped down if necessary, and worked on again or touched on to any extent; and the peculiar quality of the relief given by brush work is, perhaps, best left untouched, or at least only added to, and not taken away from by scraping down, although a very fine finish could be obtained in this way, giving the work almost the look of ivory; though, I think, in that case, departing from its true character.

The frame margin given was worked in Gesso Duro, from a design of mine, by Harold Weeks.

The design for a bell-pull was modelled in ~~or Raised~~
gesso by Osmund Weeks, for reproduction in ~~Work in~~
~~Gesso~~
electro silver, the sea-horse being in copper.

I have also used for work of about this scale
simply a mixture of plaster of paris or thin glue,

Design for a
Bell-pull,
Modelled in
Gesso



By Walter
Crane

which answered fairly well if done with directness, as the mixture dries very quickly, and is apt to crack off the ground when dry.

The device for the Art Workers' Guild is an example of this method, also worked with a brush, and afterwards tinted with lacquers re-

duced to pale tints by means of lacquer, of course, hardness.

For bolder work and higher relief I have used plaster of paris with thin glue. In this, in proceeding to model, you dip small pieces of cotton-wool paper in the glue, and having saturated them in the glue, build up your design on the panel. This should be of fibrous plaster, and suited to the surface of wall, frieze, or ceiling, or fireplace. It is important to wet the ground or shellac it, so that the glue will not be taken off by suction, before laying on the gesso. It dries slowly enough to be modelled with fingers, or with tools, and added to when dry, or with a brush. It dries very fast, and the cotton-wool makes it cling to the surface.

I have worked figures on a frieze panel, and found it difficult afterwards, since plaster and glue do not stick to faces without fibre. The "Dance of the Hours" and "The Dance" was a frieze panel worked in this way.

There are various patents and trade names on the market for working in gesso. One which I have met with is called "Denoline," which consists of a fine powder, sold in tins, which requires to be mixed with cold water to make it into a paste of any consistency. Flour appears to be an ingredient. This flour, I believe, was used by the old masters of gesso workers.

The frame border was worked in this material, the gesso mixed as stiffly as possible, applied on and modelled with an ordinary modelling tool. It dries slowly and can be retouched.

Gesso Panel



Designed by
Walter Crane

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The Dance:
Prince Paul
in Gesso



Designed by
Walter Gyne

Picture-frame in Oak
with Gesso
("Denoline")
Filling

Designed by
Walter Crane

is a little too sticky, and no doubt requires, like all the different varieties of gesso, its own peculiar treatment.

It might seem at first sight that such a material had no particular limitations or natural laws which in all art are so serviceable in evolving what we call style. Yet elastic as it appears to be, and possessing such considerable range of effect, experience soon teaches us that it has its own most fitting characteristics and tendencies in ornament. The artist, so far from desiring to disguise the real conditions of the work,

or Raised
Work in
Gesso

would rather emphasize their physical characteristics. For instance, in trying to model any design in gesso with a brush you will find the brush and the paste coming together to favour the production of certain

Treatment of
Form in
Gesso
Decoration



By Walter
Crane

of ornament, delicate branch and leaf and work, for instance, and dotted borderings.

Such forms as these the brush, charged with gesso, almost naturally takes, and the leaf may be considered almost as the reflection of the form of the brush itself.

The modelling of the more raised smooth or raised work in gesso produced by gradually and lightly adding superimposing while moist fresh gesso, on the system of *pâte sur pâte*, which amalgamates with that underneath. The artist, in modelling the limbs of figures, would emphasize the main muscular masses, allowing for the natural tendency of the paste to soften its own edges in running together: so that a limb would be built up somewhat in the way indicated in the drawing by successive layers of the material floated over each other while moist. Of course, the

System of
Modelling
with the
Brush in
Gesso



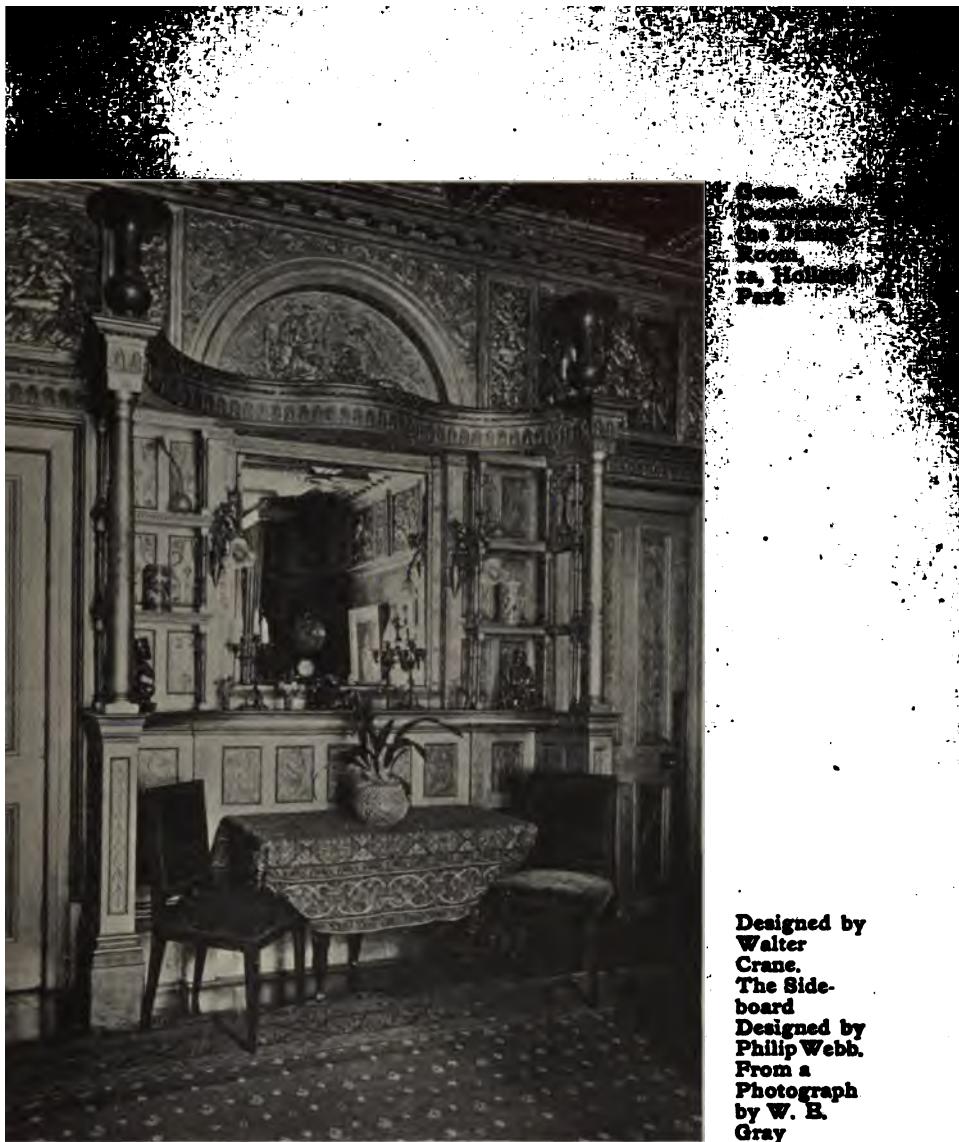
of the result depends upon not only the of touch but also on the proper consistency of the gesso, which, if mixed too thin, would be likely to lose form and run out of bounds. Gesso, therefore, for brush work should be mixed like the valetudinarian's gruel in one of Miss Austen's novels—"Thin, but not *too* thin."

It is of little use giving exact quantities, since satisfactory working depends upon all sorts of variable conditions, almost in the nature of accidents, such as temperature, quality of the materials, and nature of tools, none of which behaves exactly in the same way on all occasions,

**Gesso
Decorations:
the Dining-
Room,
22, Holland
Park**

Priesé and
Panel over
Fireplace
and sub-
sidiary work
on the Wood-
work of the
Fireplace,
Designed by
Walter
Crane.
The Fire-
place
Designed by
Philip Webb
From a
Photograph
by W. E.
Gray



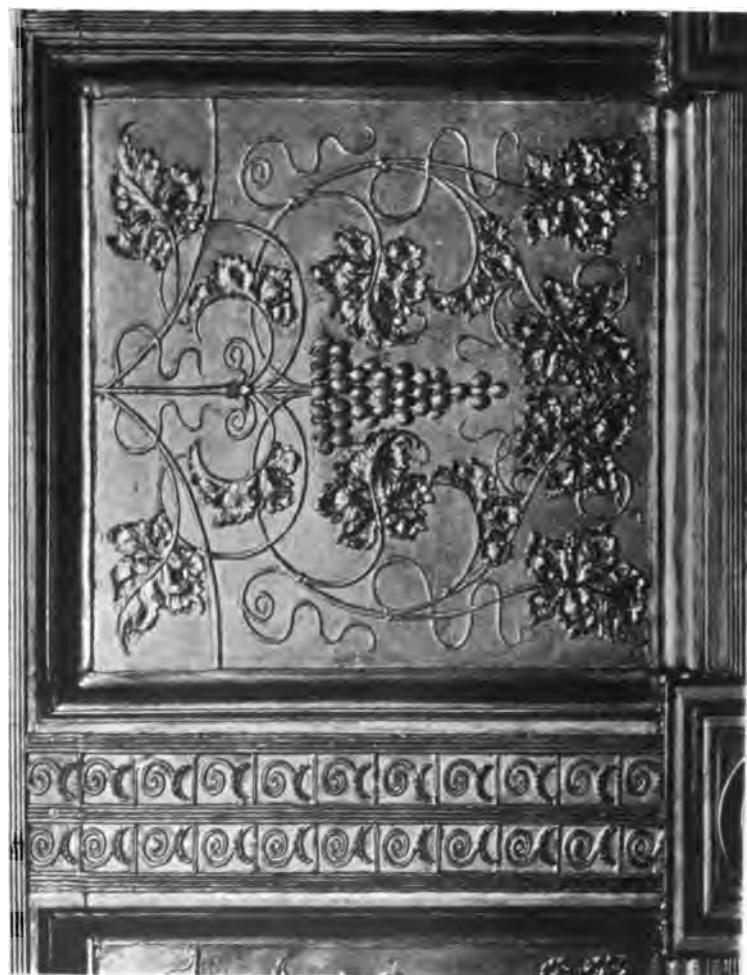


Designed by
Walter
Crane.
The Side-
board
Designed by
Philip Webb.
From a
Photograph
by W. E.
Gray

UFORM

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**Gesso
Decoration:
Detail of
Coffered
Ceiling,
1a, Holland
Park**



**Designed by
Walter
Crane.
From a
Photograph
by W. E.
Gray**

PLATE II

Individuality must necessarily lead to difference in different hands.

The personal experience of the subtle and material conditions which are in-

Or Raised
Work in
Gesso



Gesso Panel
Silvered and
Tinted with
Coloured
Lacquers
(part of
Frieze in
Dining-
Room at
1a, Holland
Park)

Designed by
Walter
Crane.
From a
Photograph
by W. E.
Gray

the parts of the production of all work of art, which can really determine their fitness to each individual worker, who must sooner or later, if his work is alive, make certain variations to suit his own particular idiosyncrasies.

Panel in
Gesso,
Tinted with
Lacquers
and Lustre
Paint



Designed by
Walter Crane

It is perfectly hopeless to attempt to pursue any form of art on purely mechanical precepts and principles. A few plain and practical directions, as to a traveller seeking his road in an unknown land, may be given, and the rest must be learnt step by step in experience, and as much as can be gathered from opportunities of seeing the work done by skilled hands, from which, indeed, everything learnable can be learnt.

Of Raised
Work in
Gesso



Panel in
Gesso,
Tinted with
Lacquer

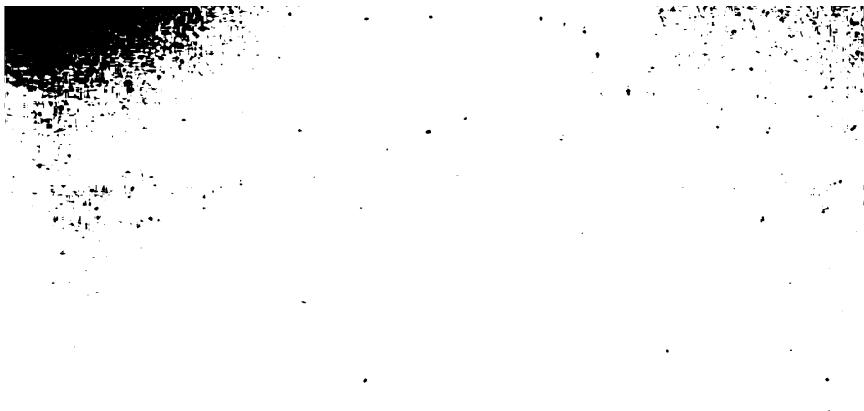
Designed by
Walter Crane

Even complete mastery over materials is, after all, not everything. In fact, from the artistic (or inventive) point of view, work only begins there, as expression comes after or with speech.

Design has much analogy to poetry. Unless the motive is real and organic, unless the thought and form have something individual in them, unless the feeling is true, it fails to interest us. Herein lies the whole question of artistic production.

Yet is it worth while to learn what can be learnt about any form of art, if only it enables

one to realize its true nature and something of the laws of its expression, which knowledge, at least, if it does not confer creative power, greatly increases the intelligent pleasure of its appreciation.



THE RELATION OF THE EASEL PICTURE TO DECORATIVE ART

DESPITE the invention of oil painting (which Cennino considered only fit for lazy painters) and the fact that many easel pictures now produced appear to have a very remote relation to decorative art as generally understood, I am still of the opinion that the easel picture, properly considered and placed in its right relationship to its surroundings, by judicious treatment and hanging, and above all by a certain mural feeling, may be *the acme of decoration*. Its relation to a scheme of decoration may be like that of a jewel in a dress.

The Relation
of the Easel
Picture to
Decorative
Art

Of course, everything depends upon the point of view of the painter, in the first place, and in the present age the easel picture has been a favourite medium not only for the display, strange to say, of that individualism and experimentalism which are supposed to be special modern characteristics, but also for the merging of individuality in schools, types, and modes of painting, or frank imitation of fashionable masters.

The easel picture differs from any conscious

piece of decoration by not being necessarily associated with, or consciously related to, any other piece or scheme of design. Yet, practically, *must* be related to something. It is related, in the first place, if a sincere work, to something in the painter's mind. Most painters are impressionable and sensitive to the effect of their surroundings. It is a common saying how much better a picture looks in the studio in the light in which it was painted, but probably it is not only the lighting but the surroundings also, and the picture has been perhaps unconsciously painted in harmony with its surroundings, its colour scheme affected by the colour of the studio walls, draperies, and furniture. Certain it is that, as a rule, painters are known by a favourite scheme and key of colour, quite apart from the fact that commercial considerations often encourage them to repeat themselves.

The modern picture-exhibitions—I mean big shows like that of the Royal Academy—have perhaps done more to destroy the decorative relationship of the easel pictures than anything. An analogous effect is produced on the mind by the sight of so many pictures of so many different sorts, subjects, and scales, and treatments crowded together, to that produced by a surface of ornament, and pattern on pattern, in internal decoration. This seems to point to the fact that true decoration lies rather in the sense of proportion and arrangement or distribution than in the use of particular units of ornament, styles, colours, or materials, and that one may destroy decorative effect by the very means of decora-

sion—but we have only to remember the meaning of the word.

I have spoken of *mural feeling* in a picture being important to its decorative quality or relationship, and it is the most obvious and necessary relationship, since it establishes a relationship with the destined place of the picture—the wall. Its frame, which separates a picture from its surroundings, also helps to unite it again to its original home, where it becomes a movable instead of a fixed panel enclosed by a moulding. No word is perhaps oftener on the pen of the prattler about pictures (or art critic) than the word "decorative," which seems very variously understood and applied to all sorts and conditions of painting. What is really comprehended by the phrase is appropriate treatment, or *mural feeling*. A satisfactory definition of mural feeling would be difficult, since it is a quality composed of many elements, but I think most artists know what they mean by it. To my mind it includes a certain flatness of treatment with choice of simple planes, and pure and low-toned colours, together with a certain ornamental dignity or architectural feeling in the structure of forms and lines of composition, and is generally antithetic to accidental or superficial characteristics or what might be called landscape effects. Does this then exclude landscapes from the decorative relation, it might be asked?

Vast distances, large sky spaces, wind-tossed trees, turbulent seas and flying shadows certainly do not tend to the repose of a wall—but it is precisely to "give interest" (to people not

interested in "mere patterns") that pictures were hung upon it, and to some tastes there could be too much drama going on. Others would rather keep it bound up in another form in the libraries and only let it loose occasionally.

But I am far from saying that even the landscape has no decorative place. But you must not mix it or have too much of it. A window may be an important decorative element in the scheme of an interior, and a landscape three parts sky may have something of the value of a window in a room. But it might be possible to decorate with landscapes alone, though one would prefer tapestry landscapes without sky, or with very high horizons, at least for the lower walls; certainly there never ought to be sky below the eye level on a wall. The Turner room has a certain unity and splendour of its own, regarded simply from a particular decorative point of view, and Turner would be pronounced I suppose the least decorative of all the feeling of modern artists—rather the epic poet in paint. Every age, too, has its own notions of decoration—indeed one might say even every decade now, or even a less period, we live so fast! No rules or canons of taste in art are of universal application or acceptable to all periods. As decoration is primarily fitness and harmony, with this central idea one may produce decorative effects with very different materials, and we have only to glance back to our historic periods to see how it was accomplished.

The standard of the Beautiful undoubtedly

shifts, or perhaps changes hands in the unceasing struggle to win it, and what is worshipped at one epoch or in one century is cast out and trodden under foot in the next. Perhaps we have (during the past century) gained a little historic balance or toleration, and all of us are not prepared to make a clean sweep of the work of the other centuries in favour of the favoured one.

But a harmonious effect is always more difficult with mixed materials (which may account in some degree for the marked success of "the tulip and the bird" in modern decorative patterns).

Certain material conditions, too, favour the growth of a higher type of art at one period than another. We can never elude the economic basis which necessarily affects our forms of art as of other things.

"Pictures, furniture, and effects" is the auctioneer's favourite phrase in describing the property of a gentleman. He might be describing pictures alone. We have heard of "furniture pictures"—but remove the reproach, is it not in the fitness of things that pictures should be furniture, and their highest destiny to decorate a room?

But when pictures become counters in the game of speculation, your decorative relations along with your social relations may take care of themselves. They become, in fact, very *poor relations*.

The portability of the easel picture may have something to do with its unrelated character in

some cases. Destined for nowhere as a rule, it goes on tour—a mere forming and often very diverse crowd in the provincial towns, and even outside. Yet there were portable and even pictures in classical and mediaeval times; certainly there was no want of decorative ship in the latter period when they were often most beautiful picture and wall decorations, as well. Even the gold-framed oil picture, treated by the Venetians as a decorative ceiling decoration—as witness the in the Ducal palace.

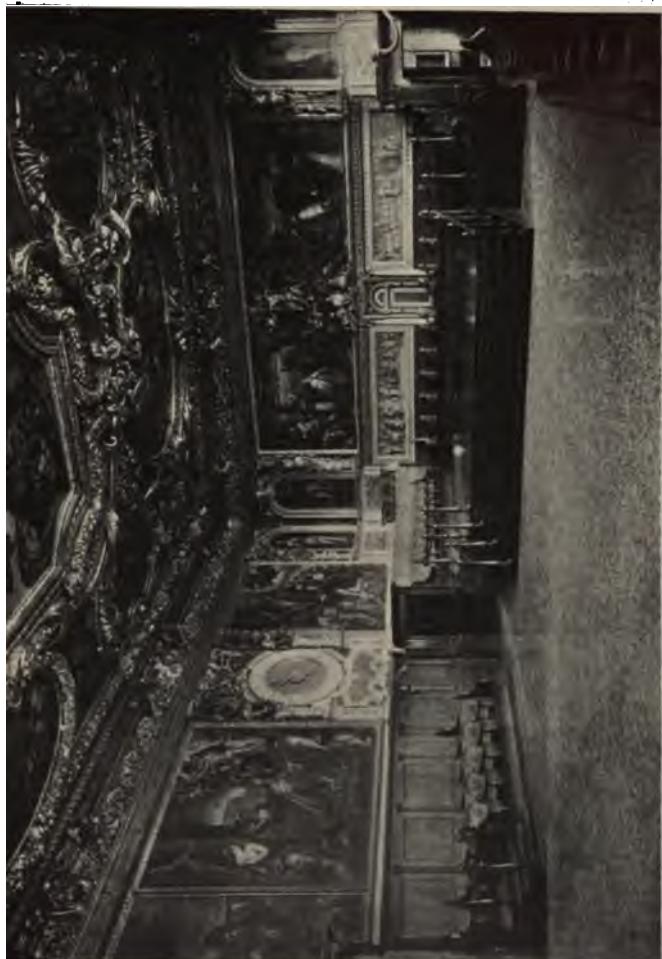
It would not be difficult to select from the National Gallery from Flemish, and even the Dutch schools, which would not only furnish pieces of decoration but also furnish the visitor with beautiful decorative schemes.

An easel picture might be made a point of its own scheme of colouring, and led up to, as it were, by every other room.

There may be, as I have said already, for the open sky in decoration, to give "sky" it enough, or put it in a frieze. It touches a rather important point of decorative relationship, too often ignored by the makers of easel pictures, that is the placing of the picture so that its horizon or vanishing point shall be on a level with the eye of the spectator.

Checked by such considerations, and by the selection of scale and tone in placing pictures,

Pictorial
Decorations,
Doge's
Palace,
Venice



From a
Photograph
by Alinari

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I would not say that decorative effects could not be had with the most easel of easel-pictures—only you must add the decorator to the painter to bring them off.

Some facetious friends of William Morris once proposed to send him a circular of subscriptions to an association for the protection of the poor easel-picture painter, since he was being frozen out by designers of wall-paintings and hangings of such mere ornamental interest that people did not want anything else on their walls.

It was a joke, but there was meaning in it, and, thrown as we are on the world-market, the floating of one man or one kind of art is often at the expense of the sinking of another. Pictures, like other things, should, in an ideal state, be produced for use and pleasure, not for profit, and there would then be less loss of their decorative relationship; and, although if this method were adopted generally, it would greatly reduce the output, I cannot help thinking the Japanese show a true instinct for the decorative relation of pictures when they only show one kakimono at a time; but, after all that would only mean that we could keep the rest of our collection—as so many masterpieces have been kept—rolled up or with their faces to the wall.

A GREAT ARTIST IN A LITERARY SEARCHLIGHT¹

OUR late veteran idealist-sculptor-painter so often sat in the chair of the literary operator, whether journalistic critic, interviewer, or more serious biographical appraiser, that one imagines that in his life-time he must long have ceased to wonder what manner of man—or artist—he might be, and, like enough, vexed not himself when vivisected to make a British holiday.

A Great
Artist in a
Literary
Searchlight

The necessity for a more or less complete "sizing up" of a famous artist, of classifying him and affixing a descriptive label, or brand, seems to answer to some requirement of the age, despite the chance of the label becoming out of date, owing, perchance, to the unexpected versatility or longevity of the labelled.

It accords with the habits of a commercial people to have "all goods marked in plain figures;" curiosity, too, must be satisfied, and art, not always at once clearly speaking out for itself in the vernacular, the literary inter-

¹ "G. F. Watts," by G. K. Chesterton. London, Duckworth and Co.

preter and critical labeller find themselves in opportunity.

It is, however, difficult enough to attempt to sum up the quality and range of an artist's work in his lifetime, and in the short perspective of time we can only present assign to him his proper relative position for all time; but, as it may be still more difficult after he has gone, there may be some excuse for the attempt—which has at least the element of daring—to make a true estimate of his powers and position while he yet lives, and while his works change their character under different impulses and influences under our very eyes.

Not that such a brilliant and sympathetic little study as this by Mr. Chesterton needs any excuse. He is always such good reading, and has such a bright epigrammatic way of putting things, that even if he were less penetrating we could not fail to be amused and stimulated. The rapid flash of his searchlight touches so airily on so many interesting objects in its sweep that, as one might say of a painter, his background, with its wealth of subsidiary and illustrative detail, is often more fascinating than the treatment of his main subject or principal figure.

The book for one thing is remarkable for the attitude the author takes up in regard to the nineteenth century—in endeavouring to account for Mr. Watts—and, as it appears to be a not altogether uncommon view with men of the present generation—although mostly born in that mythical century—one may take his view

more or less typical. But, really, from the way in which the century just closed is regarded

A Great
Artist in a
Literary
Society

"Love and
Death"



By G. F.
Watts, R.A.

one might suppose it was as distant almost as the thirteenth.

Have we then changed so much, or is it only

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the figure-heads or brain-heads and the heads which have changed? That "there is a change in the affairs of men" we all know—a fact like an ebb tide, indeed, and it may be the case that aspiration is now rather low, and that we may sigh as we look seaward at the departing ships with their brave crews sailing in the fading light of sunset, having left the foreshore, encumbered with the load and wreckage of disappointed hopes and illusion.

We may have to wait some time, and we know not what argosies of dreams and thoughts it will bring us. In the meantime we must make shift with our *one* string of hope with *one* string as best we may.

But if our young men have ceased to dream, our old men have not ceased to vision, and the great idealist-painter, so lately lost must be counted as one of such.

It will always be to his honour that in good report and evil report he steadily upheld the banner which proudly asserts the true character of painting, and claims for it, in its power, as a language of peculiar beauty, richness, and resource, to express certain deep and profound thoughts and emotions, which can only be embodied by definite but delicate symbols, and ideals not possible to be conveyed succinctly, so suggestively, and above all, so beautifully by any other means.

Matter and manner cannot really be separated in any vital art. Form and spirit become

fused in all its highest, even in all its genuine shapes.

A Great
Artist in a
Literary
Sidelight

"Sir Gala-
had"



By G. F.
Watts, R.A.

Mr. Chesterton rather steps aside in one place to poke fun at Allegory (as I note literary men are, curiously enough, prone to do), although

elsewhere he appears to admit that it has its due place and value in art, and he grows enthusiastic over Mr. Watts's use of it.

But that is just the crux. Everything depends upon the artist's use and treatment.

There is allegory and allegory. In its crudest form it is a species of poetry, in its highest form it becomes a catalogue. We may go to Cagliostro and get a recipe for the correct making of the virtue we wish to symbolize. Fedelini's designs, for instance, is given, "Donna vestita di bianco colla destra mano tiene una chiave e con la sinistra piedi un cane." Well, there you are. Whether it depends upon the artist whether this catalogue represents each item in the crudest way or becomes a really fine design, full of exterior movement and inner meaning. To appreciate the allegory of a past age one must learn to read oneself into its spirit. The Allegories of Botticelli seem to belong to a different world from those of Rubens, and appeal to quite a different mood and even order of mind. I remember with Mr. Chesterton that a lady and a bull, draped in drapery and a cornucopia, or caduceus, would quite inadequately represent modern commerce. (A bull and a bear playing polo across the globe would be nearer the mark, perhaps!) But the lady might have a place in a decorative composition, symbolizing things in the abstract, when beauty of treatment is again all-important. The spirit of Spenser's "Faerie Queene" is more painter-like in allegory (which is always in Spenser perfectly definite) than that of any other writer, and it

is perfectly blended with poetic and imaginative feeling, just as in a painted allegory the matter of it should be inseparable from its ^{A Great Artist in a Literary} ~~Searchlight~~ form.

We feel this to be so in the finest works of



"Hope"

By G. F.
Watts, R.A.

Watts, such as the "Love and Death." It is strange, however, to find Mr. Chesterton writing of allegorical pictures as if they were as plentiful as blackberries. "Millions," he mentions—I wonder how many he could count in any Royal Academy exhibition? I had supposed that alle-

gorical design was almost a lost art, as well as a dead language, in the estimation of our people—except perhaps the species which goes to the making of political cartoons.

Mr. Chesterton's discriminating appreciation of Mr. Watts's portraits is excellent, and his remarks upon the affinity between Watts and Tennyson very true. In the comprehensiveness, but indefiniteness, of their intellectual view they are akin; but vastness involves vagueness, and vagueness is a characteristic in the painter's work. In Mr. Watts's cosmic and elemental designs great half defined shapes loom up out of vaporous space. His heroes belong to no definite historic time, though in his wide catholicity and sympathy his work embraces all human types. His eye is fastened on the type and slights the circumstance. The accident, the realization of the moment is nothing to him; but one never saw a drawing in pure outline by the artist, and the charm of clear silhouette does not appear to appeal to him, neither is essential to his art. And Mr. Watts himself cannot be outlined, and therefore it seems curious to find him set down as a Puritan in one place, and a democrat (!) in another. Although Mr. Chesterton speaks of clear outline or "hard black line," as a quality not Celtic, and bases his argument that Mr. Watts is not Celtic upon the character of his line, his phrase, "sculptor of draughtsmanship," is incisive, as it is certainly a grasp of *structure* rather than outline which distinguishes Mr. Watts's work; and in this quality it may be

said lies the true reason of the difference between his portraits and much modern portraiture which seeks rather the expression of the moment and the accidental lighting, as in a landscape, rather than the type and the underlying structure, the expression of which establishes a certain relation, and that fundamental family likeness between very different individuals which Mr. Chesterton has noted. For, indeed, men and women are moulded in types far more than is commonly supposed.

After all, the great merit of Mr. Chesterton's critical remarks consists in their not quarrelling with an oak tree because it does not happen to be a pine; and in that he does not think it necessary in order that his subject may be properly appreciated to make a pavement of all other reputations, or, like the irrelevant Walrus and Carpenter on the sand—with much virtue in that “if”—“if this,”—certain essential characteristics, say, of an artist's style—“were only cleared away it would be grand.”

For the rest, Mr. Chesterton's sparkling style and wealth of whimsical illustration make the book uncommonly readable, which cannot always be said with regard to monographs on artists.



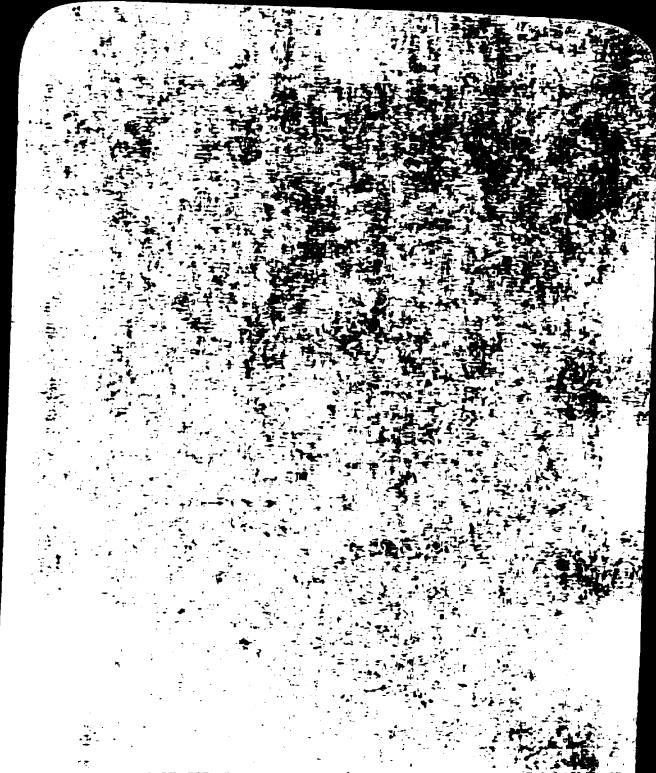
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